

DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE
Implementation Council

— FINAL REPORT —

30 NOVEMBER 2019





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Chair's foreword

It's time for a revolution in Queensland.

One where we all stand up, call out domestic and family violence and help change society for the better. If we don't, women and children and men will continue to die and to suffer at an outrageous rate.

How we drive this revolution to change human behaviour and attitudes is the difficult question.

I urge you to continue reading this final report of the Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council—it may provide some comfort to know that progress has and is being made and that there is a roadmap for change.

When I was first appointed as Chair of the Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council, the challenge to deliver the recommendations of the 2015 *Not Now, Not Ever: Putting an end to domestic and family violence in Queensland* report (the *Not Now, Not Ever* report) was formidable. As the Council's term ended on 30 November 2019, it's time to reflect on what has been achieved over the four years in monitoring the implementation of the reform program.

Council members have travelled from as far south as the Gold Coast, out to Mount Isa in the west, and as far north as Thursday Island to meet with Queenslanders who are committed to eliminating domestic and family violence in their communities.

We've spoken with doctors and nurses; with school principals, teachers and their students; with child safety officers; with judges and police officers; disability advocates; and with service providers. We've been inspired and heartened by the efforts of people who work tirelessly every day to stop the violence and to support victims and survivors.

We've had the honour of speaking with survivors—personal experiences shared by these brave women were profoundly affecting and something I will never forget.

We've met with inspiring members of LGBTIQ+ communities, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to hear their unique stories.

In my parents' day, domestic and family violence was considered a private matter. Thankfully, this is no longer the case. Government, service providers, business, community groups and people across the country are working together to bring domestic and family violence out from behind closed doors.

We're dismantling the culture of silence and stigmatisation and creating a supportive environment where victims and survivors are able to seek help.

We're teaching our children and young people to recognise, develop and sustain respectful and healthy relationships to end the cycle of violence.

A significant milestone was reached on 24 October 2019 when the Queensland Government announced that all 140 recommendations of the *Not Now, Not Ever* report had been implemented.

On behalf of the Council, I acknowledge the vision and leadership of the Premier, the Honourable Annastacia Palaszczuk MP, and the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, the Honourable Di Farmer MP, in driving the reform program. I also acknowledge the early support and guidance of the Honourable Shannon Fentiman MP, as the Minister who was then responsible for developing the Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy and establishing the Council. I also pay tribute to the government and service sector workers who've worked so hard and with such passion to realise this achievement.

On a personal note, I'd like to recognise the invaluable support, commitment and wisdom of my fellow Council members, past and present. All have juggled their role on the Council with other positions and significant responsibilities.

The Council has also been supported by an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group. They've guided us on the needs and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities. On behalf of the Council, I sincerely thank these members for their commitment, teaching, vision and resilience.

So, while we acknowledge how far we've come, there is such a long way to go.

While it's important to remember that we're only four years into a 10-year reform program shaped by Queensland's *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2026*, women and children continue to die at the hands of family members and intimate partners.

The problem remains as real and urgent as ever. We all have to work hard to maintain the momentum generated in 2015 by the work of the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland, led so capably by my predecessor as Chair, the Honourable Quentin Bryce AD CVO.

The *Third Action Plan 2019–20 to 2021–22*, released in September 2019, highlights the Queensland Government's continuing commitment to the reform program. The plan outlines further actions needed to continue embedding cultural change and system reform to build more community ownership of the reforms.

It also includes a range of actions to better support those members of our community who may be more vulnerable to domestic and family violence, who may experience violence in a different way, and who may face additional barriers to getting support that meets their needs. This includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with disability, older people, young people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and people from LGBTIQ+ communities. This work is vital, and the Council has consistently advocated for more targeted support for these groups.

The Council remains particularly concerned about our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, who remain disproportionately affected by domestic and family violence. The call for a revolution was initially made by Charles Passi, a proud Thursday Island man and member of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group. Charles, like so many of us, is weary and weighed down by the current level of violence and disadvantage. We know this revolution requires a unique approach that recognises the need for healing, and empowers each community to shape their own solutions with drive, determination and, most importantly, ownership of the problem.

Let's not be prisoners of the past, but pioneers of the future. I urge you to join the revolution. At the end of its term, the Council's message is clear: Not Now, Not Ever. *Together* we can and must end domestic and family violence.

Ms Kay McGrath OAM
Chair, Domestic and Family Violence
Implementation Council



Introduction

The Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland, chaired by the Honourable Quentin Bryce AD CVO, provided its final report to the Queensland Government in February 2015. The *Not Now, Not Ever: Putting an end to domestic and family violence in Queensland* report (the *Not Now, Not Ever* report) established a roadmap for comprehensive reform of Queensland's response to domestic and family violence, and made 140 recommendations for change grouped around the themes of:

- culture and attitudes
- service responses
- law and justice framework.

A fourth group of recommendations provided an overarching framework for delivering the reform program by setting its direction and establishing high level governance and oversight arrangements to guide and monitor the reforms. This included establishing an audit and oversight body in the form of the Domestic

and Family Violence Implementation Council, to monitor and advocate for the implementation of the *Not Now, Not Ever* report recommendations.

After extensive consultation across government and the community, in February 2016 the Queensland Government formalised its approach to implementing the *Not Now, Not Ever* report recommendations through the release of the 10-year Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2026. The initiatives and outcomes of the Strategy are underpinned by three foundational elements, reflecting the themes of the *Not Now, Not Ever* report and aimed at realising the vision of a Queensland free from domestic and family violence:

- a significant shift in community attitudes and behaviours
- an integrated response system that delivers the services and support that victims and perpetrators need
- a stronger justice system response that will prioritise victim safety and hold perpetrators to account.



The Honourable Annastacia Palaszczuk MP, Premier of Queensland, with the Honourable Quentin Bryce AD CVO

Four action plans progressively detail the work needed to achieve the Strategy's vision of a Queensland free from domestic and family violence, informed by robust monitoring and evaluation:

- The **First Action Plan 2015–16** focused on work to occur by 30 June 2016 establishing the foundations for the Strategy and creating the momentum for sustained change in the community, including developing the communication strategy and evaluation framework, and designing the integrated service delivery trials.
- The **Second Action Plan 2016–17 to 2018–19** focused on implementing a range of signature reforms and initiatives, including specialist domestic and family violence courts; integrated service responses; legislative changes that prioritise victim safety and hold perpetrators to account; and tailored communication and engagement campaigns targeting young people, bystanders, the LGBTIQ+ communities, and elderly Queenslanders.
- The current **Third Action Plan 2019–20 to 2021–22** focuses on reinforcing and strengthening the reform program, mobilising corporate and community-led action, and increasing access to service delivery for vulnerable Queenslanders.
- The **Fourth Action Plan 2022–23 to 2025–26**, not yet developed, will demonstrate the need for ongoing change by the community beyond the life of the Strategy to ensure momentum continues.

The Council has published four previous progress reports on the implementation of the *Not Now, Not Ever* report and the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy. These reports, covering specific periods, are available at: www.csyw.qld.gov.au/campaign/end-domestic-family-violence/dfv-implementation-council/about-council. In this final report, the Council decided to summarise its work in overviews of the first four years of Queensland's ongoing domestic and family violence reform program.

One of the most challenging aspects of being part of the Council is the feeling of frustration and helplessness – wanting to make a difference while knowing that the solution to this problem can only come when we have a storm of intolerance of domestic violence. Early conversations at the Council table were around wanting to take away the stigma of admitting to being a 'domestic violence victim'. I have seen a cultural change where survivors are standing up, and finding many others willing to stand with them. I am heartened that the work of the Council is making a difference, which is evident in the number of women and children who are now feeling empowered to both stand up for themselves in their home and willing to ask for help and support, knowing that they will get it.

Mrs Denise Kostowski
Principal, Forest Lake State High School



The Honourable Shannon Fentiman MP, then Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence presenting the Honourable Quentin Bryce AD CVO with the first copies of the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2026 and the First Action Plan 2015–2016 in February 2016. Photo courtesy of Kevin Phillips.

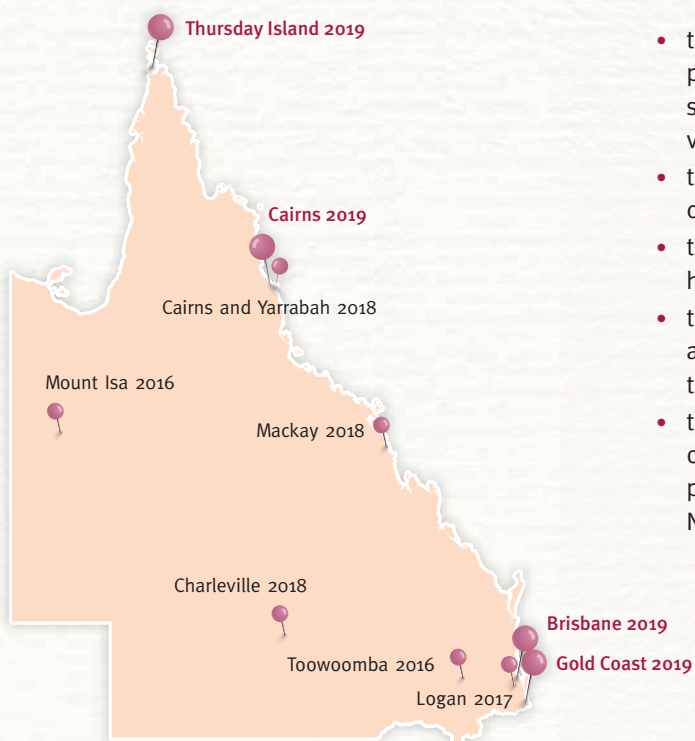


Council's regional visits and activity

An important part of the Council's work is being able to travel around the state to meet with local organisations, service providers, agencies and staff who deliver domestic and family violence services in their communities. These meetings provide an invaluable opportunity for the Council to learn about their work, the challenges they face and their successes, and inform the Premier about Queensland's progress in addressing domestic and family violence.

Over its four-year term, the Council visited various Queensland locations as shown on the map below. These visits are described in more detail in the Council's previous progress reports.

In 2019, the Council visited Thursday Island and Cairns from 16–20 June and the Gold Coast on 10–11 October. This section summarises these visits, along with the Open Conversation event, hosted by the Council in Brisbane in May 2019.



Thursday Island and Cairns: 16–20 June 2019

During its three-day visit to Thursday Island, the Council met with a range of stakeholders including domestic and family violence community champions and Torres Strait Island Police Support Officers; the Social Justice Interagency Services group; representatives of the Queensland Police Service Thursday Island division; Mura Kosker Sorority; Lena Passi Women's Shelter; and the Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service to listen, learn and champion efforts to address domestic and family violence in the Torres Strait. The Council also hosted a morning tea for community members, participated in a radio interview at 4MW and visited students at the Tagai State College. The Council learnt about the unique challenges faced by people living in the Torres Strait and identified opportunities for the government to work in partnership with non-elected leaders, traditional Elders, family and spiritual leaders, and young men and women, to identify and implement solutions to address family violence and abuse in a united and collaborative way. Although there is still an enormous task ahead to address domestic and family violence in the Torres Strait, the Council was encouraged and inspired by the many women and men they met with and their commitment to build a safe and respectful community. Some of the key observations from the visit include:

- the prohibitive cost of air and sea travel make providing domestic and family violence services and support to people living on the remote outer islands very challenging
- the housing/accommodation burdens and the high cost of living expenses
- the need for men's support, behavioural reform and healing programs
- the need to inform the community about the supports and services available to people with disability and their families
- the impact of cross border jurisdictional issues on Hospital and Health Service staff and service providers due to the Torres Strait's proximity to Papua New Guinea.

While in Cairns, the Council met with the Cairns Safer Streets team and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people involved in responding to domestic and family violence in their community. During this meeting, residents and service providers expressed concern that the risk of children being removed by the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women was discouraging some women from reporting their experiences of domestic and family violence. The need for men's support, behavioural reform and healing programs was also raised as an issue in Cairns.

In Cairns, the Council also addressed the Indigenous Mayors Summit hosted by the Queensland Police Service and the Local Government Association of Queensland, and attended the Australasian Indigenous Family Violence Policing Conference.



*Council members and members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group with the Thursday Island community
Photo credit: Matilda Loban*

Gold Coast: 10–11 October 2019

During a two-day visit to the Gold Coast, Council members participated in 16 separate meetings with local organisations, service providers, agencies and staff. The Council found the state of practice of Gold Coast services and the degree of collaboration between service providers across the Gold Coast domestic and family violence response ecosystem to be very advanced. The Council was encouraged by the integration of key services, particularly through the work led by the Queensland Police Service Domestic and Family Violence Taskforce, the Gold Coast University Hospital and Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Gold Coast Inc. There was a strong focus on problem solving and implementing innovative and flexible services to respond to community needs.

The Council also noted the number of passionate, committed and assertive staff who are acting as champions to drive change in and across services on the Gold Coast. The Council's itinerary also included visits to Varsity Secondary College with Gold Coast Titans representatives, Kalwun Development Corporation, the Multicultural Families Organisation Inc., the Southport Domestic and Family Violence Specialist Court and Bella's Sanctuary, a house built for women and children leaving domestic violence situations.

During this visit, the Council identified the following issues required further consideration:

- the need for funding to continue the Domestic Violence Prevention Centre's Numala Yalnun program, which supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people attending the Southport Specialist Domestic and Family Violence Court for civil and criminal domestic and family violence matters
- the lack of integrated support for children within the domestic and family violence system, with children generally having to go to a separate service for counselling and support
- the need for more flexibility within funding packages to enable providers to deliver services tailored to the identified needs of their communities, rather than retrofitting services to match restrictive funding guidelines
- the recommendation that the Gold Coast University Hospital – acknowledged by the Council as demonstrating 'best practice' in supporting victims and staff affected by domestic and family violence – shares information and practices with other hospitals around the State.



During the visit to the Gold Coast, Council members and the Honourable Di Farmer MP, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence met with staff of the Gold Coast Domestic Violence Prevention Centre

Open Conversation (Brisbane)

On 3 May 2019, the Council hosted an Open Conversation event at the Edge Auditorium with survivors of domestic and family violence. The event was also attended by the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, the Honourable Di Farmer MP; then Police Commissioner Ian Stewart; and Directors-General for the Department of the Premier and Cabinet; Queensland Health; Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women; and senior executives from the Department of Housing and Public Works and the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. Facilitated by the Council's Chair, Kay McGrath, 11 survivors of domestic and family violence bravely shared their stories and insights into their experiences of domestic and family violence, the support they received and their journey in navigating the service system. This event was a powerful and moving experience that gave both the Council and Queensland Government representatives who attended, a renewed sense of purpose in relation to the work they do and their efforts to address domestic and family violence.

Insights gained from the survivors included:

- **One person can make all the difference** – Survivors consistently identified as a positive turning point for them the moment they came into contact with someone who understood the nature of domestic and family violence, and who was able to assist them with the support needed to put them on a path to safety. While the roles of these people varied—they were teachers, neighbours, police officers, magistrates, health staff and very often specialist service providers—they were a crucial link for each survivor.

- **Integrating services works, but has not been perfected** – survivors were positive about various integrated case management models. However, it was clear there are opportunities to better understand and improve the way victims are supported throughout their journeys.
- **Victims with disability and from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds need enhanced support** – domestic and family violence services struggle to provide the necessary support to people from diverse backgrounds with specialist needs.
- **Not all services are visible, and not all victims know how to access services** – services are only of benefit to people who are aware of and able to access them. Efforts to improve the visibility of and access to existing system responses may result in significant improvements in the experience of victims, and increased confidence in the system.



The Council has been instrumental in emphasising the opportunities for linkages between sectors and organisations, and for capacity building within the sector. The Council's regional visits have instigated introductions between various service providers and stakeholders, helped build bridges between sectors, and progressed support for victims. For example, the Council meeting in Mackay initiated discussions between the local council (the Mayor), the mining companies and service providers in regard to the increasing rates of domestic and family violence recorded by miners within that community.

Ms Karni Liddell
NDIS Queensland Ambassador

Personal reflections – Associate Professor Kathleen Baird



I wear a range of hats that inform my perspective on Queensland's domestic and family violence reform program. I have been a midwife for more than two decades, and most days you will find me working as an academic in the field of midwifery or as the Director of Education for Women, Newborn and Children's

Services at the Gold Coast University Hospital. As a member of the Council and Deputy Chair of Queensland's Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board, I have been particularly interested in those reforms directed at comprehensive and integrated services with a special interest in the role of the health services to identify, empower and effectively support those experiencing domestic and family violence to escape violence and safely rebuild their lives.

These reforms include the integrated service response trials in Beenleigh, Mount Isa and Cherbourg that aim to ensure the safety of victims and manage the risk posed by perpetrators through a collaborative multi-agency process. Fundamentally, this approach is about breaking down the silos that have so often been identified as a barrier to protecting victims of domestic violence. But identifying those experiencing domestic and family violence is the first critical step in engaging the service responses necessary to help them to safety. As a midwife, I have long been passionate about improving the health response to domestic and family violence and advocated for routine screening by midwives. The trusting relationship women form with their midwives throughout pregnancy, labour and after her child is born makes midwives ideally placed to enquire about the nature of a woman's relationship, their sense of safety and available support and to provide appropriate support and referrals if domestic violence is disclosed.

Hospitals are often the first point of contact for those experiencing domestic and family violence and are uniquely placed to identify victims and survivors and then offer appropriate support and referrals. In October this year, I was incredibly proud that the Council had the opportunity to see first-hand the response we have

developed at the Gold Coast University Hospital. We have worked hard to embed a culture within the hospital that domestic and family violence is everyone's business and all hospital staff have a role in identifying and supporting victims and perpetrators of domestic and family violence whether they are pregnant women, patients, children or fellow staff members. Gold Coast Health was the first public health service in Queensland to appoint a specialist and dedicated Domestic and Family Violence Coordinator. The Coordinator ensures that all hospital staff understand their roles, and that our frontline health workers are well trained and supported to sensitively ask the right questions to identify potential domestic and family violence victims, and then to open pathways towards assistance for them.

Experienced social workers work across the health services' emergency and maternity departments and with the Homeless Health Outreach Team. The Emergency Department is supported by an in-house forensic unit, an active elder abuse support worker, improved platforms for information sharing and a multi-disciplinary team to support patients affected by domestic and family violence. Midwives are trained to not only ask the right questions, but to look out for particular signs of domestic and family violence, and to respond and refer accordingly. A partnership with the Women's Legal Service Queensland has made free and confidential onsite legal services available for women experiencing domestic and family violence who present to the hospital.

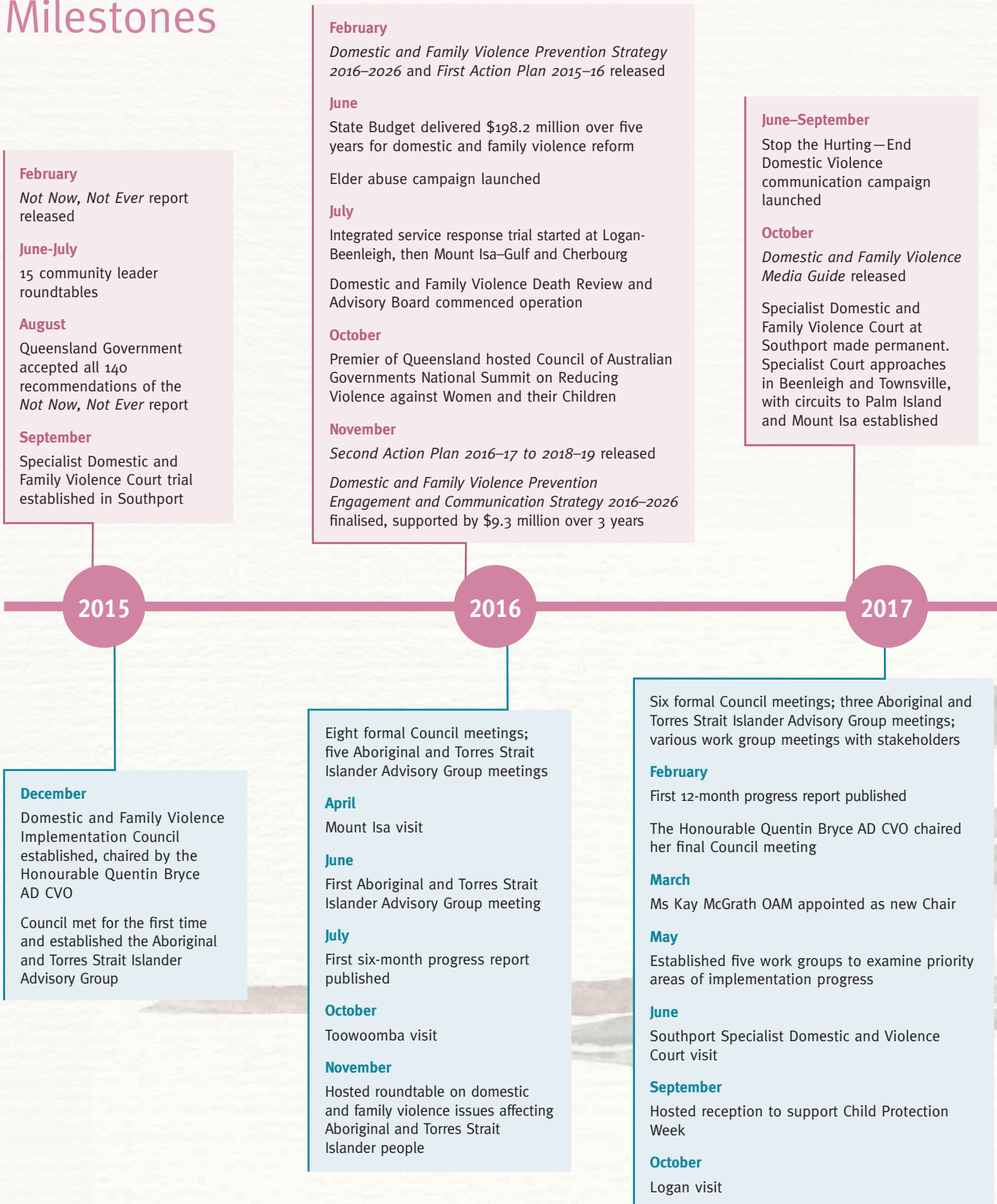
It took a great deal of hard work by many dedicated people, supported by strong commitment from our health service executive and managers and a broader integrated service network across the Gold Coast, to deliver a responsive, compassionate and integrated support system for patients and staff affected by domestic and family violence. The hospital continues to refine its systems and processes, but I hope that our experience will encourage and support other health services to develop integrated services that focus on the safety of those experiencing domestic and family violence.

Associate Professor Kathleen Baird
School of Nursing and Midwifery, Griffith University

Director of Education, Women, Newborn and Children's Services, Gold Coast University Hospital

Deputy Chair, Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board

Milestones



Not Now, Not Ever reform program

January

Evaluation Framework released

April

Bystander campaign launched

May

Publication of regular court statistics about domestic and family violence began

December

LGBTIQ+ domestic and family violence awareness campaign launched

May

Framework for Action on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Domestic and Family Violence released

Queensland's plan to respond to Domestic and Family Violence against people with disability released

All departments White Ribbon accredited

June

Evaluation of integrated service response and high risk teams released

August

Third Action Plan 2019–20 to 2021–22 released

October

Prevent. Support. Believe. Queensland's Framework to address Sexual Violence released

All 140 *Not Now, Not Ever* recommendations delivered, signalling move to next phase of the reform program

2018

2019

2020

Four formal Council meetings; three Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group meetings; seven work group meetings with stakeholders involved in implementation

February

Second 12-month progress report published

May

Cairns and Yarrabah visit

August

Mackay visit

November

Visited Charleville in collaboration with Beyond the Broncos Girls Academy

Five formal Council meetings; five Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group meetings

February

Third 12-month progress report published

May

Hosted Open Conversation event with domestic and family violence survivors

June

Torres Strait and Cairns visit

October

Gold Coast visit

140 *Not Now, Not Ever* report recommendations delivered, supported by a record investment of \$328.9 million over six years

Final Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group meeting

November

Final Council meeting

Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council

Summary of reform progress

The *Not Now, Not Ever* report contains 140 recommendations – 121 recommendations directed at the Queensland Government and 19 directed at non-government organisations. In its 2018 progress report, the Council reported that as at 30 November 2018:

- 106 recommendations (95 government and 11 non-government) and 16 enabling actions had been completed
- 33 recommendations (26 government and 7 non-government) and 7 enabling actions had commenced, and
- 1 non-government recommendation was yet to commence.

On 24 October 2019, the Queensland Government announced implementation of all 140 *Not Now, Not Ever* recommendations, supported by a record investment of \$328.9 million over six years. More detailed information on each of the recommendations is available in the Government's report, *Delivery of Recommendations* available at: <https://www.csyw.qld.gov.au/resources/campaign/end-violence/dfvp-nnne-delivery-of-recommendations-report.pdf>.

The Council notes that while the delivery of the recommendations is a significant milestone, much remains to be done and the reform program is continuing with the implementation of the *Third Action Plan of the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2019–20 to 2021–22*.

The following section summarises key reforms delivered over the past four years against the three *Not Now, Not Ever* report themes. The actions to frame, guide and monitor the reform program are also summarised below.

Framework for change (Recommendations 1–8, 10–11, 13)

- 10-year *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016-2026* and supporting action plans developed following significant community consultation
- Evaluation Framework developed to measure impacts and outcomes of the Strategy and inform future action
- Funding and Investment Model established to prioritise future government funding
- Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council established, with annual progress reports on implementation of the reform program tabled in Parliament
- Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board established, with annual reports and recommendations to improve service systems tabled in Parliament
- Commissioned research on elder abuse, domestic and family violence involving people with disabilities, and LGBTIQ+ communities informing development of specific strategies, responses and services

Personal reflections – Denise Kostowski



As a secondary school principal, I firmly believe our children are the key to breaking the cycle of violence in families. If our society can send a clear message that violence in the home is not acceptable, and empower the children to stand up, we have a catalyst for change. Our

challenge is that children learn their parenting skills from what they see at home. Some students need to 'un-learn' the modelled behaviour and then learn what a loving and respectful family sounds, looks and feels like. Where do they learn this?

In October 2019, my school held its second White Ribbon Rugby League afternoon to raise awareness and knowledge of domestic and family violence. The event has grown from a single game to a four-game afternoon, and because domestic and family violence is such an important issue for our students, competition for a place in the squads is fierce. The players, their parents and families, and school staff all took the White Ribbon pledge, led by the event's major sponsor, Heritage Bank.

As a community, there are so many important issues that children see as impacting on their lives, for example, climate change and global warming, and ensuring safety and inclusivity for people from LGBTIQ+ communities. Students also want to support community health promotions, such as Pink Ribbon, Daffodil Day, and Australia's Biggest Morning Tea. The challenge is to ensure that domestic and family violence gets its hearing.

One way to stand apart from the many other social issues is to have recognisable role models. Role models must trigger an emotional connection. Hence, we need role models from a range of industries—including sports, the arts, media and academia—so that there is opportunity to connect with the full range of community. It is also important that the role models are active in the community of the target audience across social media and traditional media.

Our vision of Queensland being a state free of domestic and family violence is still a work-in-progress, but we now have a very solid foundation and there is much happening to achieve this vision.

Mrs Denise Kostowski
Principal, Forest Lake State High School

Personal reflections – Deputy Commissioner Steve Gollschewski



Shifting cultural attitudes and beliefs requires an unwavering and focused commitment. Since the release of the *Not Now, Not Ever* report, the Queensland Police Service has made great strides in promoting respectful relationships and taking a person-centric policing approach to domestic and

family violence. In 2017, the Queensland Police Service achieved White Ribbon Accreditation in acknowledgement of the Service's ongoing support and commitment to a future free from violence. As a Service, we have promoted evidenced-based initiatives designed to effect positive cultural and attitudinal change. We have worked to raise awareness of domestic and family violence and promote positive attitudes among our officers through the delivery of multiple education and training programs, including a specialist domestic and family violence course, and to provide professional development opportunities to both sworn and unsworn members.

Ending domestic and family violence requires a whole of community approach to challenge normative attitudes and beliefs that underlie this issue. Domestic and family violence is everyone's business. Each May, the Queensland Police Service supports the Queensland Government's domestic and family violence prevention campaign by holding various events and activities to raise awareness, including participating in the Darkness to Daylight CEO challenge.

Along with cultural and attitudinal change is a need to be innovative in our approaches to keeping victims safe and holding perpetrators to account. I was honoured to showcase to Council members a number of police initiatives making a real difference to the way we respond to domestic and family violence, such as:

- the Sunshine Coast Domestic Violence and Vulnerable Persons Unit's perpetrator behavioural change program
- QLITE tablet devices improving the policing response to domestic and family violence incidents by giving frontline officers access to real-time information in the field
- improved evidence gathering through the use of body-worn cameras by police.

As a Council member, it has been a privilege to work alongside others and to see first-hand positive changes occurring across Queensland, both within the Queensland Police Service and more broadly across government and the community. Looking forward, an integrated approach is key to maintaining and progressing strategies to keep victims safe and hold perpetrators to account. As a Service we continue to take a 'build, measure and learn' approach to generate ideas, reflect on past practices and give members authority as well as the opportunity to be innovative in creating strategic initiatives to address domestic and family violence. Through a shared vision and sense of purpose, the Queensland Police Service continues to support the work of the Council in ensuring all Queenslanders feel safe in their own homes, with children growing and developing in safe and secure environments, free of domestic and family violence.

Deputy Commissioner Steve Gollschewski APM
Queensland Police Service

Changing community attitudes and behaviours (Recommendations 12, 14–70)

- *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Engagement and Communication Strategy 2016-2026* helping to create intergenerational cultural change across the community
- Tailored communication and engagement campaigns targeted to young people, bystanders, LGBTIQ+ communities, and older Queenslanders to:
 - raise awareness and understanding of domestic and family violence
 - raise awareness of help and support services
 - increase understanding of how to safely intervene and provide support as a bystander.
- Respectful relationships programs are being delivered in Queensland state, Catholic and independent schools, and will be strengthened through the inclusion of a range of programs and resources in the school curriculum
- Domestic and Family Violence Workforce Support Package, including domestic and family violence leave, implemented throughout the Queensland Government and released to support the private sector
- All Queensland Government departments White Ribbon accredited
- Local governments, businesses, community groups and faith-based organisations across the state helping to drive change with their own initiatives
- Domestic and family violence toolkit of resources for the health workforce, helping health practitioners to recognise and respond to domestic and family violence
- Domestic and family violence referral services within hospitals and Emergency Departments connecting victims and survivors to support
- Workforce capacity and capability building, supported by training, quality standards and auditing, developing the skills of domestic and family violence service providers to support victims, survivors and perpetrators and ensuring service providers protect their workers from vicarious trauma.



Council members addressing students of Varsity College during the visit to the Gold Coast in October 2019

Personal reflections – Lance Hockridge



Since the Council was established, we have seen first-hand the critical role of government in leading and influencing change. From the personal leadership of the Premier and her Ministers, to the legislation and programs that have been

implemented, and to the

leadership and example of public service leaders, we have seen active and innovative programs and legislation effectively implemented across a wide range of government departments and agencies.

Similarly, there has been a real and discernible shift in the understanding, engagement and response of the business community. It is fair to say that initially, the response was most notable from ‘the big end of town’. However, pleasingly, there has been real evidence of more widespread knowledge and response. Implementation of domestic and family violence programs and initiatives like leave policies, for example, are important. But even more so is being part of a broader community response that demonstrates that any and all domestic and family violence is unacceptable. We acknowledge that there remains much to be done in this space; but of particular recent note has been the positive engagement within Minister Farmer’s Corporate Roundtable initiative.

Likewise, we have seen some tremendous examples of local community leadership. The work that Council saw, for example, in Toowoomba and in Mackay was inspiring. For there to be real and sustainable grassroots change in culture there must, in my view, be real, felt, demonstrated leadership at local and community levels. In the places mentioned, we saw the way local and personal leadership was able to encourage and promote change.

That sustainable change in culture must start with our young people. Attitudes about, and reactions to, domestic and family violence are well formed during teenage years. The Council has been pleased to see the rollout of various initiatives but especially the Respectful Relationships programs in our schools, and it is important that these and related programs see increased take-up rates. It was pleasing to see so many young people participating in community forums such as the Toowoomba Together domestic and family violence event, as well as in sporting activities supporting anti-domestic and family violence messaging.

Finally, throughout our time on the Council we have seen and experienced the importance of role models of all kinds. I am reminded of the unbelievably positive role of our inaugural Chair, the Honourable Quentin Bryce and more recently of Queensland Great, Kay McGrath, as well as high profile Council members such as Karni Liddell and Darren Lockyer. Right across the state we have seen so many examples of people of influence who have become involved and stepped up to leadership roles against domestic and family violence. There are so many great ‘unsung heroes’ in this space who should be acknowledged. The more we can provide such constructive leadership, the more will be the underpinning of this crucial cultural change.

Mr Lance Hockridge
Deputy Chair, Domestic and Family Violence
Implementation Council

Integrating service responses (Recommendations 9, 71–89)

- Comprehensive framework enabling key government and non-government agencies to share relevant information to improve their capacity to properly assess risk and manage serious domestic and family violence threats
- Place-based integrated service responses implemented in three locations with evaluation outcomes guiding further development—Logan-Beenleigh (urban), Mount Isa-Gulf (regional) and Cherbourg (discrete Indigenous community)
- High risk teams coordinating services and culturally appropriate safety responses for victims and children identified to be at high risk of being killed or seriously harmed from domestic and family violence in Logan-Beenleigh, Ipswich, Brisbane, Cherbourg, Mackay, Moreton (Caboolture), and Mount Isa-Gulf
- Seven new supported crisis accommodation services established across Queensland for women and children escaping domestic and family violence, including some with integrated accommodation for pets
- Nine new Women's Health and Wellbeing Support services helping women to recover from domestic, family and sexual violence
- New ways of working with perpetrators to prevent abusive behaviour, including with young people who use abusive behaviours towards their mothers, and fathers who expose their children to domestic and family violence
- Technology to keep victims safe implemented and evaluated, including the Keeping Women Safe in Their Homes initiative
- \$1.5 million allocated over two years from 2019–20 for the *Plan to respond to domestic and family violence against people with disability* to reduce the additional barriers people with disability face to escape domestic and family violence and access inclusive support
- Elder Abuse Helpline providing free and tailored information and referrals to support services for anyone who experiences, witnesses or suspects the abuse of an older person by someone they know and trust
- Elder Abuse Prevention Unit educating community workers, older people and their families about recognising the signs of elder abuse and where people can get help
- New system requiring court staff to engage interpreters if required at a first appearance in court being trialled at the Southport Specialist Domestic and Family Violence Court, for possible wider rollout
- Two specialist domestic and family violence services funded to support women and children from a culturally and linguistically diverse background—the Gold Coast-based specialist Support Assessment Referral and Advocacy (SARA) program within the Multicultural Families Organisation Inc., and the 99 Steps program at The Access Gateway in Logan.



Council members with representatives from the Gold Coast University Hospital during the Council's visit to the Gold Coast in October 2019

Personal reflections – Karyn Walsh



We have seen real progress in the integration of services, and in the way we are more carefully and intentionally managing the safety of women and children in relation to high risk circumstances. One of the reasons for this is better information sharing and coordination

between the Community Corrections teams in Queensland Corrective Services, domestic and family violence services, and government services to keep victims/survivors safe and hold offenders known to police and the justice system accountable.

We know much more needs to be done across the system, particularly in terms of responses to more vulnerable groups. The Council's May 2019 Open Conversation event with survivors of domestic and family violence was powerful, inspiring and challenging. It is important to all of us that we continually listen to what women are telling us about the difficulties and stresses they experience in accessing the service system. We need to be committed to continuous improvement, and use their insights to guide further development of more responsive and trauma-informed services—both mainstream and specialist—that give women the support and choice they need.

Our approach to inclusion and diversity also needs to be enhanced. Responses can, at times, be fragmented and competitive rather than ensuring that both specialist responses and mainstream responses complement and inform each other. We know that disclosure of violence and abuse can occur in many different ways and places. Planning would benefit from better data across the system to inform a needs-based approach to inclusive services. Integrating this data with the lived experience of victims/survivors and the professional knowledge and expertise of service providers would provide the foundations for evidence-based practice and investment in services.

We have learnt that leadership makes a difference and needs to be shared by government, not-for-profits, survivor advocates, academics, researchers, business, corporates and the community. The scale of the problem of domestic and family violence requires no less than a whole of community approach.

While the *Not Now, Not Ever* reforms have rightly focused on improving integration across government and non-government services, we can't forget that not all women and children want to go through these pathways to get the assistance and support they need to be safe. Not all women and children contact police and the justice system. Many choose to directly approach non-government organisations instead. But these women may not get the same attention as those who engage with the system via a police/justice response and those whose abusers are engaged in the criminal justice system. Many specialist regional domestic and violence services and agencies have told the Council of their concern about only being focused on crisis responses because they lack the capacity to fully engage and support women through to recovery and stability, regardless of how or where initial contact is made with the service system.

We need to safeguard against people being trapped in crisis services, rather than moving to safety and stability. This means not only managing the risk victims face from violence, but also providing an individualised and integrated response to the full range of needs both victims/survivors and offenders have in their journey to recovery. This includes housing, healthcare (physical and mental health) drug and alcohol services, training and employment, and income support.

The voices of Council members advocating for people with disability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have challenged us, and I wish we could have progressed these issues more. The thoughtful leadership of the Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group, as well as my own work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders, has reinforced that self-determination is a critical solution. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander strategies need to be led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-controlled organisations. Building on the strength of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled primary care health system and family support services is just one way to achieve this.

We really do need to move towards a dual approach with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership guiding the strategy for domestic and family violence, rather than having to constantly adapt to mainstream services. It is very clear from many conversations that a justice response alone will not bring the cultural change required. Building upon the trust and strength of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-managed organisations is a critical success factor that needs further investment for implementation.

For me, the priorities going forward include:

- further integration and investment at a grass roots and community-based level, multidisciplinary responses to connect women, children, men and families to appropriate systems of care such as health, housing, employment and training
 - ensuring the changes needed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are guided by the recommendations of the Advisory Group or similar group
 - targeted responses for victims, survivors and offenders who may be more vulnerable to, and impacted by, domestic and family violence, as well as integrated approaches within generic or mainstream services—all population groups need choice
- a business case to government for further investment into community-based responses to support women and children from crisis to recovery and ensure their safety and stability, including more services for children
 - incorporating additional measures in the Government's Advancing Queensland priority 'Give all our children a great start', relating to trauma-informed early childhood responses, and integrated approaches to responding to domestic and family violence
 - preventing and resolving homelessness more quickly (given that domestic and family violence is the greatest cause of homelessness) by enhancing specialist housing and domestic and family violence responses as part of greater recovery focus
 - specific strategies informed by data and lived experiences, to respond to family violence perpetrated against older people, and by adult family members with unmanaged or undiagnosed mental illness, and drug and alcohol issues
 - urgently addressing the intersection of the health and mental health systems, with drug and alcohol services.

Ms Karyn Walsh AM
CEO, Micah Projects

Domestic and family violence is a complex issue and the needs across the community are diverse and multiple. As a Council member, I have witnessed excellent outcomes achieved through partnerships developing collaborative strategies aimed at addressing domestic and family violence. There are challenges that arise with establishing the logistical and systems components of these partnerships but once in place, these collaborative efforts produce a far wider and greater impact in the community. These challenges will continue into the future, and it is critical we maintain strong collaboration to drive system-wide and enhanced collective responses to address this insidious form of violence.

Deputy Commissioner Steve Gollschewski APM
Queensland Police Service



Queensland Police Service officers at the National Day to Remember Candle Lighting Vigil held in Brisbane during Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month in May 2019.

Strengthening law and justice system responses (Recommendations 90–140)

- Legal reforms to improve how the legal and justice systems deal with domestic and family violence to protect victims and survivors and hold perpetrators to account
- Permanent Specialist Domestic and Family Violence Courts at Southport, Beenleigh and Townsville, with circuit courts travelling to Mount Isa and Palm Island, to provide wraparound support services for victims and perpetrators
- Community justice groups in 11 discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are supporting local and culturally appropriate domestic and family violence justice and social responses
- Statewide duty-lawyer service to support domestic violence order applicants and respondents
- Ongoing professional development for judicial officers and court registry staff, supported by a publicly available Domestic and Family Violence Bench Book to guide judicial officers on practice, procedures, the operation of the law, and sentencing
- Increased access to a variety of targeted perpetrator intervention programs supported by new professional practice standards
- New national scheme ensuring domestic violence orders are automatically recognised across Australia, supported by national information sharing for police and courts
- Police holding perpetrators to account by prosecuting the underlying criminal behaviour, such as assault and stalking, in addition to a domestic and family violence offence, such as the breach of a domestic violence order
- New Queensland Police Service vulnerable persons framework is guiding police training and responses, including an expanded statewide network of specialist police domestic and family violence coordinators advising frontline police, quality assuring police responses and working with other service providers to deliver integrated responses to victims and hold perpetrators to account
- Statewide network of police liaison officers is building relationships with LGBTIQ+ communities, alongside the award-winning Queensland Police Service LGBTIQ+ workplace support network.

- Specialist police training in domestic and family violence dynamics and responses; investigating non-lethal strangulation; the intersection of domestic and family violence with other factors and vulnerabilities, such as disability, age, mental illness and homelessness; and engaging with people from the LGBTIQ+ communities in vulnerable situations are helping police respond sensitively and appropriately to domestic and family violence incidents
- Trial of Domestic and Family Violence Coordinators embedded in the Brisbane Police Communications Centre. These Coordinators complement the District Domestic and Family Violence Coordinator network, providing additional statewide support to frontline officers on legislation, policy and practice; appropriate police response to non-lethal strangulation reports; and identification of appropriate support and referral pathways for victims and offenders
- GPS monitoring technology can be used for perpetrators on bail or parole as part of a broader safety plan for victims. The Queensland Government is also exploring other technology initiatives to ensure the safety of victims and survivors is paramount.

Specific legal reforms to protect victims/survivors and hold perpetrators to account include:

- Giving police more flexibility to issue enforceable protection notices that cover a victim, their children, family members and associates, and to impose additional conditions on the perpetrator (until a court hears an application for an order)
- Ensuring the views and wishes of people who fear or experience domestic and family violence are heard before the court makes decisions affecting them
- Reversing the presumption of bail for defendants charged with domestic violence offences and requiring the court to consider the defendant's risk of release
- Requiring courts to consider an order excluding the perpetrator from the family home (an 'ouster' order), allowing victims to remain where it is safe for them to do so
- Requiring Queensland courts considering domestic violence orders to use available powers to vary or suspend family court parenting orders that are inconsistent with protection needed by the victim or their children
- Requiring cross applications—where both parties apply for an order against each other—to be considered together to ensure the person most at risk is identified and protected
- Increasing the minimum duration of domestic violence orders to five years (unless the court gives reasons for not doing so) and requiring courts to tailor the conditions of orders to better meet a victim's protection needs
- Creating a new criminal offence of non-fatal domestic strangulation to hold perpetrators to account and identify victims in high-risk situations
- Giving victims 'special witness' protections in criminal matters, meaning they do not have to face perpetrators when giving evidence in court
- Making domestic violence an aggravating factor in sentencing, requiring the court to give heavier weight to the severity of offences committed within the context of domestic and family violence
- Increasing penalties for breaches of domestic violence orders, police protection orders and other related offences
- Ensuring victims/survivors are better informed if alleged perpetrators are released on bail or from prison
- Introducing a criminal offence in relation to the non-consensual sharing, including threats to share, of intimate images (known colloquially as revenge porn).



Council and Advisory Group members on Thursday Island with Queensland Police Service representatives.



Detective Inspector Marc Hogan, Gold Coast Domestic and Family Violence Taskforce, presenting to the Council during the visit to the Gold Coast in October 2019.

The *Not Now, Not Ever* report recommendations provided a shared direction for government by establishing and prioritising areas of reform to address domestic and family violence. The Queensland Police Service has positively and purposefully supported progress of these recommendations. I am particularly proud of the work the Queensland Police Service has undertaken in delivering a change program that balances the expectations of the community with the need to effectively police domestic and family violence through ensuring victim safety and holding perpetrators to account for their behaviour. Working from the perspective of frontline officers, the Queensland Police Service continually seeks opportunities and enhancements to deliver best-practice policing responses and preventive strategies to victims, perpetrators and family members impacted by domestic and family violence. This continual improvement strategy positively supports frontline police and in turn contributes to a positive culture that embraces the imperative to address domestic and family violence. I am also proud of the way government, as a whole, and the Queensland community has come together to confront domestic and family violence and the part the Queensland Police Service has played in that collaboration.

Deputy Commissioner Steve Gollschewski APM
Queensland Police Service

Personal reflections – Judge Ray Rinaudo



It was an honour and a privilege to serve as an ex-officio member of such a dedicated and effective Council. Having served from its inception, I resigned on 7 July 2019 as my term as Chief Magistrate of Queensland had come to an end.

As its name suggests, the Council was

established to oversee the implementation of the recommendations of the *Not Now, Not Ever* report into domestic and family violence. This required the government, the various departments, courts, police and private organisations and individuals identified as key stakeholders to work collaboratively to address the various recommendations and to set about making the necessary decisions to drive truly effective change.

Although it is fair to say that not all sectors were as responsive as others, in purely quantitative terms many of the recommendations have been implemented. But it would be a mistake to assume that the mere implementation of those original recommendations is enough. Evaluation of the effectiveness of those changes must be undertaken and, where necessary, further changes made.

It is by no means the case that the prevalence of domestic violence has significantly diminished or indeed slowed. Much important work remains to be done.

From my perspective as Chief Magistrate, by far the most important recommendations of the report were 96 and 97: the establishment of a Specialist Domestic and Family Violence Court. I took the view that the best place for such a court would be Southport. The court was established and, in my respectful view, was extremely successful. This success can be attributed to, firstly, the dedicated magistrates who ran the court, particularly Magistrate Strofield, who responded to my personal request to head the court, and secondly, the integrated team that was gathered to staff and support it, including dedicated registry staff, community

support organisations, police and lawyers both from the private profession and from Legal Aid, community legal services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service (Qld) Ltd. Initially, Magistrate Strofield was the only Specialist Domestic and Family Violence Court Magistrate in Southport. This grew to two fairly quickly, and today three magistrates share the workload in what is a very busy court. After evaluation and further funding, specialist courts have also been introduced in Beenleigh, Townsville, Mount Isa and Palm Island.

As a result, there has been genuine change in the recognition and treatment of domestic and family violence cases, both civil and criminal, in the courts generally.

As far as the Magistrates Court is concerned, recommendations 101 to 105 placed an obligation on the Chief Magistrate to do certain things. I caused each of those recommendations to be implemented almost immediately, with financial support from the Attorney-General's Department. The appointment of specialist magistrates and the continuing professional development of all magistrates continues. Real improvements in the way domestic and family violence matters are dealt with by the court have filtered through to all magistrates, registry staff and stakeholders across the state.

Of course, more still needs to be done. Many courts in Queensland were simply not built to accommodate the special needs of Domestic and Family Violence Courts, such as remote safe rooms and private lawyer interviewing rooms. The government has committed substantial funds to equip the courts in Southport, Beenleigh and Townsville with the necessary facilities to support the important work of the Specialist Courts in those locations. In addition, more perpetrator programs are urgently needed. The Magistrates Court now comprises more than 100 magistrates, who constitute courts in 118 locations across our culturally and geographically diverse state. It remains a challenge to ensure that appropriate domestic and family violence programs are available across the state.

Most importantly, the light shining on this critical issue must not be allowed to dim.

Judge Orazio (Ray) Rinaudo AM
District Court of Queensland

The experience of domestic and family violence for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Domestic and family violence disproportionately affects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities. Current datasets do not accurately capture the rate of domestic and family violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and likely underreport the actual level of violence. What we do know, however, is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women:

- report physical or threatened violence in the last 12 months at more than three times the rate of non-Indigenous women¹
- are hospitalised for family violence-related assaults at 32 times the rate of non-Indigenous women.²

Family violence is not a part of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures³. The prevalence, severity and complexity of domestic and family violence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

is influenced by a diverse and complicated mix of historical, structural and socio-demographic stressors. This is compounded by gender, racism, intergenerational trauma and profound disadvantage, particularly in regional and remote communities.⁴ While there are similarities in gendered violence experienced by all women and children, there are also fundamental differences in the experience of violence by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children. These experiences are shaped by the different contexts in which violence occurs and the specific barriers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women face in reporting the violence and seeking support.⁵ Specialised approaches that focus on healing the cumulative harms experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are essential to effectively respond to and prevent domestic and family violence.

“From invasion to the present day, the colonisation process has involved deliberate violence, in many different forms, against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This process has produced a series of highly traumatic impacts for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities in Australia, impacts that continue today.

Both policies and practices of forced child removal, together with widespread institutionalisation, especially with the mission system, severely disrupted family and community relationships, parenting practices and cultural connections.

Dispossession from land, in addition to economic exclusion, have produced disempowerment and enforced dependency. Policies of protectionism and assimilation have caused a significant loss of culture, language and knowledge. This in turn has caused serious disruption to the social and cultural norms of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities. High rates of incarceration—of young people, men and women—further disrupt family and cultural relationships, and cause lasting psychological damage for many.

The combined effects of this foundational violence, in conjunction with subsequent processes and practices, has created severely traumatic experiences for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men, women, children and communities. This intergenerational, multigenerational trauma is one of the underlying drivers of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people generally, particularly where this violence occurs within families and communities.”

Our Watch (2018). *Background paper: Understanding violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children*. Melbourne: Our Watch, p. 51.

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics. (ABS) (2016). *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2014–15*. (cat. no. 4714.0), cited in Our Watch. (2018). *Background paper: understanding violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children*, Melbourne: Our Watch, Melbourne, p. 29.

2. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) (2019). *Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019*. Canberra: AIHW.

3. Our Watch. (2018). *Background paper: understanding violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children*. Melbourne: Our Watch, p. 21.

4. Our Watch (2018). *Changing the picture: a national resource to support the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children*. Melbourne: Our Watch.

5. *Ibid.* pp. 42–43.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group members: (clockwise from back left) Kieran Chilcott, Samantha Wild, Charles Passi, Keryn Ruska and Edward Mosby. (Absent: Heron Loban)

Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group

In recognition of the unique challenges faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group (the Advisory Group) was established in 2016 to support the Council and ensure its work in overseeing the *Not Now, Not Ever* reform program was informed directly by the needs and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. The Advisory Group has reported to Council through written records of advice and reports from its Chair, Mr Edward Mosby, who is also a member of the Council. The Council's Chair, Ms Kay McGrath, has also attended Advisory Group meetings.

Members of the Advisory Group are:

- Mr Edward Mosby (Chair) – Founder and Principal Psychologist, Wakai Waian Healing
- Mr Kieran Chilcott – Chief Executive Officer, Kalwun Development Corporation
- Ms Heron Loban – Senior Lecturer, Griffith Law School
- Mr Charles Passi – Executive Director, Passi Enterprise and member of the Eminent Persons panel working with the Queensland Government and Torres Strait Islander communities to inform the legal recognition of Torres Strait Islander families' continued use of traditional child rearing practices

- Ms Keryn Ruska – Senior Legal Officer, Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women
- Ms Samantha Wild – Director and consultant, Awakening Cultural Ways

In addition to 16 formal Advisory Group meetings, members participated in a range of activities including Council visits to Logan in 2017 and Charleville in 2018.

In 2019, the Advisory Group held five formal meetings and, in June, visited the Torres Strait and Cairns with Council members. Members were also involved in the Council's regional visit to the Gold Coast in October 2019.



From left to right: Edward Mosby, Heron Loban, Kay McGrath and Charles Passi during the Council's visit to Thursday Island

One of the most challenging parts about being a Council member is witnessing the reality of the circumstances and situations our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are currently experiencing. Personally, I perceive many similarities between how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are treated and how people with disability are treated and perceived. I believe we often only consider funding mechanisms as a support for domestic and family violence. However, there should be more of a focus on employment, training and education within both communities, to empower people to find a purpose and financial freedom.

It was acutely apparent within the remote and rural communities that departments are still operating within silos and in theory it should be easier to communicate efficiently considering how close in proximity they are.

The evidence is overwhelming that our First Nations people have substantially higher levels of disability than non-Indigenous people. Having a disability makes them part of a marginalised group within a marginalised group. Considering this, there needs to be more resources and time allocated to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability in both the disability and domestic and family violence sectors and systems.

Ms Karni Liddell
NDIS Queensland Ambassador

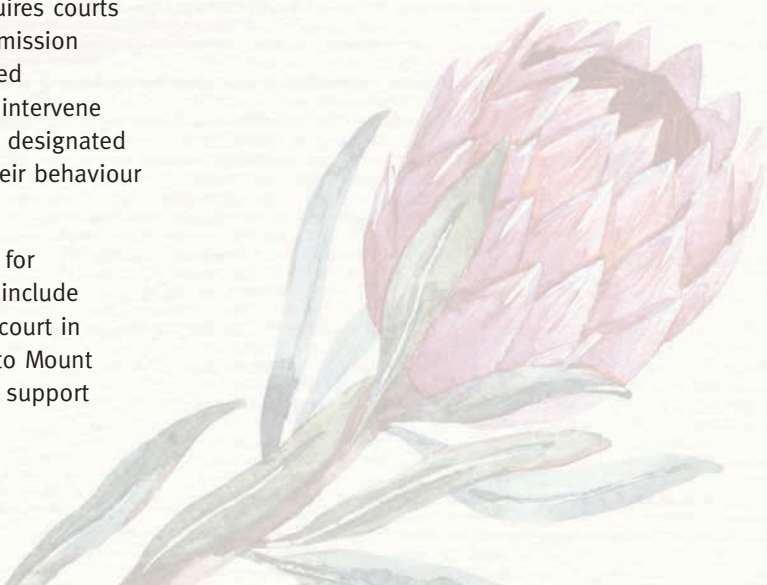
The *Not Now, Not Ever* report recommendations

The *Not Now, Not Ever* report recommendations directed at preventing and responding to domestic and family violence perpetrated and experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been implemented through:

- the high risk team and broader integrated service response in Cherbourg, which is currently being evaluated (Recommendations 9 and 74)
- new service agreements with community justice groups in 11 discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, which are supporting local and culturally appropriate domestic and family violence responses (Recommendation 92)
- a new domestic violence trigger that requires courts to notify the Family Responsibilities Commission about domestic and family violence related convictions, enabling the Commission to intervene and work with residents living in the five designated welfare reform communities to change their behaviour (Recommendations 93 and 94).

Other initiatives delivering targeted support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people include the specialist domestic and family violence court in Townsville, and the court circuits travelling to Mount Isa and Palm Island, to provide wraparound support services for victims and perpetrators.

In addition to these specific recommendations, the Council notes that all *Not Now, Not Ever* report recommendations should be considered as influencing the experience of domestic and family violence by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in some way. The Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016-2026 is supported by a strong evaluation framework to track progress and outcomes of the reforms, and in the Third Action Plan the government committed to review data collection approaches to improve tracking and evaluation. The Council reinforces the importance of monitoring and reviewing the impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of the second and third order effects of the reforms, including under existing flagship evaluations of signature reform initiatives and other evaluations.





Council members with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group member Kieran Chilcott, Chief Executive Officer of the Kalwun Development Corporation ((fourth from left) during the visit to the Gold Coast in October 2019

The importance of locally-driven services

The Council was impressed by a range of locally-driven initiatives to prevent and respond to domestic and violence across the state. These include the Far West Indigenous Family Violence Service operating in Cunnamulla, Charleville and St George, and the many health and social services delivered by the Gold Coast's community-controlled Kalwun Development Corporation.

In October 2019, Torres Strait Island communities came together at the second Umi One, Mepla Way (One People, Our Way) conference to develop their own domestic and family violence plans. Community champions from each outer island were inducted to help guide and embed further action, supported by local services and leaders. Having visited Thursday Island earlier in the year, the Council looks forward to seeing the outcome of these efforts.

The Council also commends the Department of Justice and Attorney-General for prioritising funding from within departmental resources for a six-month trial of the Numala Yalnun Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander program on the Gold Coast in 2019. The program provided intensive and individualised support and referrals for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victims, survivors and perpetrators attending the Southport Specialist Domestic and Family Violence Court. It supported their recovery by increasing their engagement with services to more holistically respond to their legal, social, health and financial needs. It is disappointing that funding was not available to continue the program, despite the program's success.

Moving forward

A 2017 recommendation by the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board along with advocacy by the Council and Advisory Group led to the May 2019 release of *Queensland's Framework for Action—Reshaping our Approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Domestic and Family Violence 2019–21*, with implementation supported by \$1.5 million over two years. The framework sets out 17 additional targeted actions for the Government over the next two years, including to:

- support three Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to develop community-led domestic and family violence action plans
- work with one remote/discrete community to develop a domestic and family violence social reinvestment project
- identify promising programs and local initiatives that could be supported, replicated or scaled up
- establish a new community-controlled family wellbeing and safe advice and referral service employing specialist domestic and family violence workers
- map gaps in existing data collections, identify meaningful indicators and establish a monitoring and evaluation process, including annual reporting.

These reforms have the potential to significantly and positively shape frontline services and support responses for Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Progress in addressing domestic and family violence to date, however, has been variable and much more needs to be done, particularly in rural and remote communities. The Advisory Group, supported by the Council, has identified that the following actions need to remain at the forefront of efforts to address the prevalence and severity of domestic and family violence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

- **Robust evaluation of new and existing programs and services** – informed by the experiences and views of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, clients and service providers, to ensure that limited resources are effectively and appropriately targeted.
- An **audit of existing domestic and family violence services** being delivered by general and specialist agencies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to better understand the range and location of services, and the resources, capacity, and effectiveness of the organisations to deliver these services.
- **Continued development of integrated service responses** that connect government and non-government agencies within communities to prioritise the safety of victims and work with victims and perpetrators to address the full range of their needs.
- **Continued emphasis on workforce capability building**—Queensland Government is funding the establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led mainstream service to support mainstream and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations through planning, training and professional development of their workforces. The service will be delivered by the Healing Foundation in partnership with Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS). This represents a significant opportunity to positively shape frontline services, and must be effectively monitored and evaluated.
- **Increased access to behavioural change programs for perpetrators**, both in custody and in the community. There is currently limited availability to these critical programs. Specialised programs that are appropriate and responsive to specific cohorts of perpetrators, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people with disability, are needed. Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perpetrators are also the victims of violence and the cumulative harms, which must be considered as part of any intervention model.
- **More flexible funding models** to enable the delivery of services to those who need them, and not just clients who meet rigid service guidelines (for example, clients with children). Government departments need to further explore how they can work creatively across traditional funding silos and with local service providers, to deliver innovative and effective community-led initiatives that respond to locally identified needs, so as not to restrict the capacity of providers to respond to clients with intersecting characteristics and needs.
- Refocusing service investment to **prioritise the prevention of violence**, rather than reinforcing reactive responses to the incidence of violence, is needed to address the underlying drivers of domestic and family violence. These drivers include a complex intersection of general and specific gendered factors, compounded by racism and other legacies of colonisation, segregation and exclusion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities as well as for non-Indigenous people and society.⁶

6. Our Watch. (2018). *Background paper: understanding violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children*. Melbourne: Our Watch, pp. 12–14.

The Queensland Government has committed to a tangibly different way of working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people under the Framework for Action, Path to Treaty process and Local Thriving Communities reforms. The Council and the Advisory Group support this direction.

Strategies and services to prevent and respond to domestic and family violence must understand, and also respond to, the ongoing impacts of collective and individual intergenerational trauma, supporting a process of recovery and healing that empowers victims, survivors and perpetrators by maximising choice and control.

Genuine community ownership of prevention and intervention responses to domestic and family violence is also essential to ensure that strategies and services respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' identity and sense of self—that is, they are culturally safe, trusted and accessible. Responses and services are unlikely to meet the needs of individuals or communities, or to be effective unless they are developed, owned and led by local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations are already engaged with the communities they work with and in. These organisations, and their peak bodies, are well positioned to help other services engage effectively with communities.

The Advisory Group and the Council also supports exploring the use of community-owned and led **restorative justice approaches** in domestic and family violence situations involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Restorative justice generally involves a conferencing process that provides a safe environment for a trained facilitator to bring together everyone involved in a criminal offence to talk about what happened and collectively resolve what needs to happen to repair the harm and prevent it from happening again. The process supports offenders to take responsibility for their behaviour and agree on how to make amends to the victim in a way that is meaningful to the victim. The perspective of the victim focuses the justice process on the harm caused by the behaviour—to the victim, families and the community—rather than simply punishing the offender. Done well, restorative justice processes also help victims to move forward with their recovery, and heal relationships between victims and offenders and, more broadly, within communities.

In Queensland, restorative justice conferencing is most commonly used in the youth justice system, although it is also available for adults who admit certain offences, including assault. Importantly, the model has traditionally been used for 'incident-based' violence—such as a one-off assault—rather than domestic and family violence, which is typically recurrent.

Caution in using restorative justice approaches in cases of sexual violence and domestic and family violence situations is appropriate. The Advisory Group acknowledges concerns that the dynamics of power and coercive control can undermine the safety of victims in the process and enable perpetrators to manipulate the conferencing process. It is also important to understand the dynamics of extended family and kinship structures in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families that are associated with some cases of violence—not all such violence involves coercive control.

For the following reasons, the Advisory Group believes there is benefit in exploring restorative justice approaches for domestic and family violence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities:

- they focus on healing and restoration in a way that is meaningful to the victim/survivor, and on the prevention of further harm, rather than punishment
- they can support perpetrators—and the community around them—to take responsibility for their behaviour and the harm caused
- they are consistent with self-determination, because all those affected can be involved in decision making about how to move forward
- their versatility can offer victims/survivors flexibility and control over the justice process
- they can help preserve family relationships, if that is what the family members want
- traditional law and cultural practices can be incorporated, encouraging community responsibility and ownership for solutions
- they can avoid a criminal justice response and reduce Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander over-representation in the correctional system.

Victoria's Royal Commission into Family Violence recommended the development of a framework and pilot program for delivering restorative justice options for victims/survivors of family violence, noting that "the versatility of restorative justice processes means that they can be adapted to address the complexity and diversity associated with the experience of family violence".⁷ In 2018, Victoria's Department of Justice and Community Safety implemented the Family Violence Restorative Justice Service for victims and survivors of family violence who have needs that are not met by other parts of the justice system. An ongoing evaluation will inform an expansion of the service from 2020.

The Council encourages the Queensland Government to monitor the development of the Victorian model and other Australian and overseas models, particularly those in First Nations communities, with a view to establishing pilot programs in Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, supported by properly resourced evaluation.

In last year's report, the Council reiterated the need for urgent action and increased momentum to address domestic and family violence being experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The Council has seen and heard first-hand the impact of domestic and family violence on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through its regional visits. We are not making sufficient progress in addressing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as victims and perpetrators of violence, and in the criminal justice system. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are being hospitalised for family violence-related assaults at 32 times the rate of non-Indigenous women.

The suicide rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is twice that of the non-Indigenous population.⁸ Suicide is the leading cause of death in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people between 15–34 years of age.⁹ Direct experience or sustained exposure to domestic and family violence has been identified by reviews, inquests and Queensland's Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board as one of a complex web of factors in youth suicide.

This all indicates that we need a fundamental change in our approach to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities. This call is not new. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been calling for the principle of self-determination to guide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy for many years now. Self-determination includes community ownership, which is generally described as the community itself identifying and developing its own solutions to address its own needs and priorities. Ideally, services should be delivered by community-controlled organisations. Where this is not possible, the agencies should work in genuine partnership with local leaders on the solutions. We have always struggled to do this well.

Through the Path to Treaty process and Local Thriving Communities reforms, the Queensland Government has signalled its intention to work in a tangibly different way with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities ensuring the communities have greater decision-making authority for determining their priorities and the services they need. The Council and the Advisory Group support this direction and urge the Queensland Government and communities to work together with honesty and respect to enable this to happen.

The release of *Queensland's Framework for Action—Reshaping our Approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Domestic and Family Violence 2019–21* is promising. We must now back it up by a concerted implementation effort shaped and driven with a genuine partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.

7. State of Victoria. (2016). *Royal Commission into Family Violence: report and recommendations*, volume 5. Parliamentary paper no. 132. p. 143. Available at: <http://www.rcfv.com.au/Report-Recommendations>.

8. Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2019). Leading causes of death in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. *Causes of death, Australia, 2018*. (cat. no. 3303.0). Available at: <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/3303.0~2018~Main%20Features~Leading%20causes%20of%20death%20in%20Aboriginal%20and%20Torres%20Strait%20Islander%20people~2>.

9. Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board. (2019). *2018–19 Annual report*. Brisbane: Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board, p. 68. Available at: <https://www.courts.qld.gov.au/courts/coroners-court/review-of-deaths-from-domestic-and-family-violence>.

Personal reflections – Edward Mosby



Over the last four years there has been intent to highlight many challenges facing the state around addressing domestic and family violence as experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. I have been encouraged by the understanding and acceptance of the

uniqueness of the challenges that exist within and across Torres Strait and Aboriginal communities, due to the cultural, socioeconomic and geographical differences and variations that exist. However, there has also been strong encouragement for the opportunities that would come from genuine and enabled approaches to self-determination and empowerment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, families and communities.

It has been asserted that helping survivors, seeking change for those using violence and the prevention of violence are not exclusive but more mutually supporting goals when working towards addressing violence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The *Not Now, Not Ever* report provided an opportunity for the review of programs in Queensland correctional facilities for men, women and youth. Significantly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, undertaking the initial evaluation of several programs and initiatives within correctional services across Queensland definitely highlighted and strengthened the understanding of where further enhancements towards addressing and preventing violence can be achieved.

In the last four years we have learnt many things. We have learnt that collaboration appears easier said than done—not because of a lack of want, but because previous systems and processes have created barriers that require dismantling. We have learnt that many of the most vulnerable families are involved with several services and agencies at one time. We have learnt that when services are able to collaborate with these families there is a greater likelihood of more positive outcomes. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, there is an ongoing need for collaboration across services and systems within and between government,

non-government agencies, community services and the private business sector. Because of the broad influence of particular government services across the generations, it is suggested that ongoing efforts focus on further detailed and enhanced collaborations between the following departments: Child Safety, Youth and Women; Communities, Disability Services and Seniors; Health; and Education; and Queensland Corrective Services. It is in these spaces that there is a need for great leadership.

Looking forward, I would suggest that there needs to be an ongoing evaluation of the benefits and outcomes of the original 140 recommendations of the *Not Now, Not Ever* report, as they relate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This extends on my view that every initiative taken to reduce or prevent violence for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities needs to have a mandatory and non-negotiable evaluation for effectiveness, including process and outcomes. The intent here is to enhance validity, efficiency and effectiveness, and the timeliness of efforts to promote healing.

In my closing stages as a Council member and Chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group it has been encouraging to see the Queensland Government making a documented commitment under *Queensland's Framework for Action: Reshaping our Approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Domestic and Family Violence 2019-2021*. Bringing to life this framework will take leadership, courage and ongoing effort and commitment. I feel that further reform activities require a greater influence to be provided to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory or oversight body in order to maintain accountability and ensure the relevance of reforms. In finishing, I take this opportunity to encourage all people of Queensland to reinforce the following two views:

Our children have the right to be safe, not live in fear and to reach their potential in all aspects of their identity. Their voices count and matter.

There is much evidence that suggests reconciliation within and between cultures would produce several opportunities to end violence and abuse across Queensland now and into the future.

Mr Edward Mosby
Founder and Principal Psychologist, Wakai Waian Healing Chair, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group

Queensland's domestic and family violence reform program in the broader policy environment

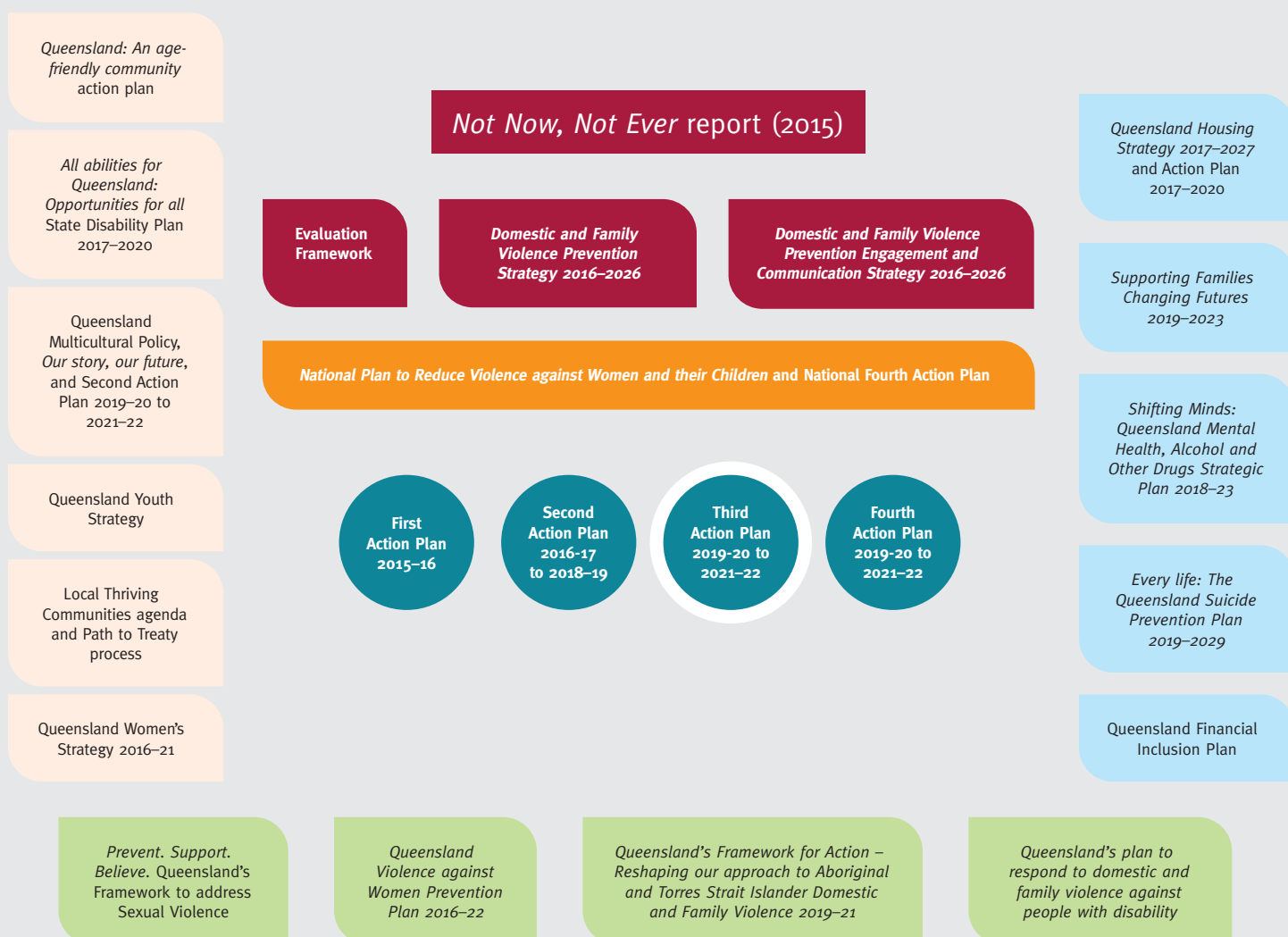
The Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Strategy and Action Plans complement a range of other Queensland strategies:

- tackling factors associated with domestic and family violence
- supporting Queenslanders who may be more vulnerable to, and impacted by, domestic and family violence
- promoting diversity, inclusiveness and cohesion across the community.

Some of these strategies are shown in the diagram below. The Queensland Government is also working with the Australian Government and other state and territory governments to develop and implement a range of relevant national strategies to:

- address the unacceptable level of violence against women and improve the safety of women and children who move across state and territory borders
- respond to the different forms of abuse of older Australians—physical, sexual, psychological, emotional and financial abuse, and neglect.

The foundations for change: Queensland's domestic and family violence policy environment



Tackling factors associated with domestic and family violence

The Council has consistently heard from service providers as well as those in the community who experience domestic and family violence and its impacts about the complex interaction of social, geographic, health and economic factors that contribute to the violence and influence victims' decisions about and experiences of escaping violence and rebuilding their lives. Addressing the causes and effects of domestic and family violence therefore requires multi-faceted responses across a range of policy areas. The Council acknowledges the range of other Queensland Government strategic frameworks that complement and support the reform work central to the *Not Now, Not Ever* report agenda and *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2026*.

Domestic and family violence is a major cause of **homelessness** for victims and their children. The Queensland Housing Strategy 2017–2027 identifies women and children escaping domestic and family violence as a specific cohort at particular risk who need a range of housing supports at different points in their journey. The construction of seven new shelters was prioritised as an action under the housing strategy. Housing and homelessness service hubs in Toowoomba, Logan, Cairns, Moreton Bay region and Townsville are also supporting people in crisis. In discussions with victims, survivors and service providers across the state, the Council has consistently heard about the urgent need for access to safe and stable housing to help victims escape, and recover from, domestic and family violence. The Council is encouraged that the Government has continued to prioritise housing responses in the Third Action Plan.

There is also a role for the corporate sector. In October 2019, the Council was privileged to tour Bella's Sanctuary, which is Australia's first purpose-built bridging accommodation to enable women and children escaping domestic and family violence to get back on their feet and rebuild their lives. The \$1.67 million facility is a partnership between Mirvac property group, which donated the land; Halcyon, which managed the design and build of the property free-of-charge; and DV Connect, which now manages the day-to-day operations. This model demonstrates what can be achieved when all sectors take responsibility for our response to domestic and family violence. The Council commends all involved for their efforts.

A housing-first approach is needed through partnerships with the Department of Housing and Public Works and domestic and family violence services. Too many women are trapped in homelessness without their basic need for affordable and sometimes supportive housing. This is not a housing alone response. We need the integration across disciplines and the resources across government to plan, develop and implement a housing-first strategy for victims and survivors of domestic and family violence.

Ms Karyn Walsh AM, CEO, Micah Projects

Domestic and family violence is also a significant risk factor for child abuse and neglect. Queensland's plan for *Supporting Families Changing Futures 2019–2023* seeks to support vulnerable families to protect and care for their children. A specialist domestic and family violence practitioner works in each Family and Child Connect service to advise and assist with the response to vulnerable families experiencing domestic and family violence.

A perpetrator's mental illness, drug or alcohol use, gambling or other addictive behaviours do not, on their own, explain or cause violence, but they may contribute or exacerbate the level or frequency of violence. Similarly, the experience of domestic and family violence is associated with higher rates of mental illness in victims/survivors and their children. *Shifting Minds: Queensland Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs Strategic Plan 2018–23* focuses on connecting people to comprehensive, integrated and recovery-oriented services to improve mental health and wellbeing and reduce problem use of alcohol and other drugs.

The *Queensland Financial Inclusion Plan* recognises the impact of economic insecurity and dependence on victims of domestic and family violence by reducing their access to financial resources or services, restricting their capacity to leave violent relationships, and undermining their financial stability long after the relationship has ended. Emergency financial relief is available through direct payments, utility subsidies and concessions and targeted initiatives attached to specific support programs. The Council also notes that the financial literacy program and employment programs remain a priority under the Third Action Plan. Financial counselling, to support those experiencing financial hardship, and building financial skills are crucial to enabling victims to escape violence, rebuild their lives and achieve economic independence.

Personal reflections – Kathryn McMillan



The visionary work of the Queensland Police Service's Domestic and Family Violence Taskforce has been very successful in bringing together resources across service providers to target high-risk perpetrators of domestic and family violence and protect their victims. The Taskforce has

now expanded its focus to include elder abuse and domestic and family violence committed by young people. The latter resonates with the findings of various reviews and inquiries over six years, including the 2016 Independent Review of Youth Detention,

which I co-chaired with Professor Megan Davis, the 2013 Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry led by Judge Tim Carmody, and the 2018 *Report on Youth Justice* by Bob Atkinson AO APM. Each of these reviews identified early intervention with families as critical to preventing children being exposed to abuse and violence, and thereby breaking the cycle of violence within a household.

This, in my view, is part of the next significant challenge for the Council—to interconnect domestic and family violence with mental health, substance misuse and child protection, many of these factors being omnipresent. It is also now time to drill down into disability and other groups within the community who feel they have not been heard as yet and address their specific issues.

Ms Kathryn McMillan QC

Targeted responses for those who may be more vulnerable to, and impacted by, domestic and family violence

The Council has consistently advocated for targeted support for those members of our community who may be more vulnerable to domestic and family violence, and impacted by it because they experience violence in a different way and face additional barriers to getting support that meets their needs. This includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with disability, older people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and LGBTIQ+ communities. The Council is encouraged to note that two of the signature actions under the Third Action Plan are to implement plans, released in 2019, to specifically address domestic and family violence affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people with disability. Other actions focus on children and young people affected by domestic and family violence as either victims or perpetrators. All of this work is vital.



The Honourable Di Farmer MP, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Council member Faiza El-Higzi, Director-General Mr Michael Hogan with advocates for women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds during a Multicultural Month breakfast held at Parliament House



Council member Karmi Liddell discussing respectful relationships with students at Varsity College during the Council's visit to the Gold Coast in October 2019

In 2017, the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board, strongly supported by the Council and its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group, called for the government to urgently develop a specific **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family violence** strategy. The resulting strategy was released in May 2019. *Queensland's Framework for Action—Reshaping our Approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Domestic and Family Violence 2019–21* acknowledges the *Not Now, Not Ever* reforms, but also sets out 17 additional targeted actions over the next two years. This is further discussed in the previous section on the work of the Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group.

In July 2019, after a review of the impact of domestic and family violence on **people with disability** (Recommendation 10 of *Not Now, Not Ever* report), the Government released Queensland's plan to respond to domestic and family violence against people with disability. The plan builds on the broader reform program to address the additional barriers to safety

experienced by people with disability, including access to inclusive support, social isolation and communication challenges, and inclusive education, work and employment.

The prevalence and experience of violence is one of the most pressing issues for women and girls with disability. Australian research indicates that people with disability experience more frequent and more intense violence than those without disabilities, and that violence tends to continue over a longer period and result in more severe injuries.¹⁰ Violence against women and children with disability can include types of abuse that may be distinct to their circumstances, including the withholding of food, water, medication, care or support. Women with disability also disproportionately face the violation of their reproductive autonomy, including forced or coerced sterilisation.¹¹ Again, the Council urges the Government to continue working with people with disability to understand and provide appropriate support that meets their needs.

10. Dowse, L., Soldatic, K., Didi, A., Frohmader, C. & van Toorn, G. (2013). *Stop the violence: addressing violence against women and girls with disabilities in Australia. Background paper*. Hobart: Women with Disabilities Australia. Available at: http://wwda.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/STV_Background_Paper_FINAL.pdf.

11. KPMG. (2016). *The cost of violence against women and their children in Australia*. Canberra: Department of Social Services. Available at: https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/o8_2016/the_cost_of_violence_against_women_and_their_children_in_australia_-_summary_report_may_2016.pdf.

Personal reflections – Karni Liddell



It is a difficult and emotional time for people with disabilities following the start of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability. Some of the tragic and horrendous stories the Royal Commission will hear are from the past, but I am confident

that many are still happening. The reporting of these stories is likely to encourage people with disability to seek support, and I expect we will see an increase in disclosures by people with disability about their experiences of domestic and family violence and sexual assault.

I have found it challenging to observe the extent to which people with disability are excluded from most data sets—especially within mainstream domestic and family violence services and the justice and legal systems. Women with disability are especially under-represented in population-based studies on the prevalence of domestic and family violence and sexual assault. In its first comprehensive report on family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia, published in 2018, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare specifically identified the lack of data in relation to particular cohorts of at-risk population groups, including people with disability, as a notable evidence gap. It is only when this is addressed that we will better understand how common violence against people with disability is, the range of experiences, and the types of support needed.

People's experience of disability is diverse. Disability can be physical, intellectual, mental, developmental, or any combination of these. It is also important for government and service providers to understand that disability sits in every diverse group. Although older people experience higher rates of disability, around 21 per cent of young people under 25 years have disability.¹² Around 36 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have some form of disability—twice the rate of the general population.¹³

Despite the prevalence of disability and the increased risk people with disability have of experiencing violence, including domestic and family violence and sexual assault, domestic and family violence services struggle to know how to support people with disability. The domestic and family violence sector knows how to respond to

domestic and family violence and the disability sector knows how to provide services to people with disability. However, neither sector responds very effectively to the needs of people with disability who are also experiencing domestic and family violence. Specialist services are extremely limited. Only eight of the 122 services identified in the statewide audit of domestic and family violence services in Queensland focused on providing support to people with a disability as a specialised cohort.

There is a shortage of accommodation across the domestic and family violence sector, but suitable accommodation for victims with disability is even more limited. The use of ouster provisions has proved an effective alternative in some circumstances, and should be encouraged for situations involving people with disability.

It is also imperative that people with disability—especially those with acquired brain injury and intellectual disability—are identified within perpetrator programs to ensure that interventions can be appropriately targeted to them. This will also give them the opportunity to be linked with relevant disability and medical interventions which may decrease their chances of re-offending.

We know statistically that people with disability are perhaps as much as seven times more likely to experience sexual and physical abuse in their lifetimes compared to people without disability. Perpetrators of these crimes know they have been more likely to get away with it because the victims do not have as many avenues to pursue justice in the court system because supports for communication and evidence-gathering have not been there.

I urge the Queensland Government to commission a specific review into the vulnerabilities of people with a disability in domestic violence situations when dealing with the legal and justice system. Everyone with intellectual, cognitive or physical disability has the ability to communicate with the right supports and services. Too often people with an intellectual disability are considered an 'unreliable witness' and their case is not prosecuted, or they are denied the right to tell their stories in court. These perceptions are incorrect and damaging. If we encourage people with disability who experience domestic and family violence to disclose, we must support them appropriately through the justice system, otherwise we are placing the victims and their families in serious danger because of their disclosure.

People with disabilities are united in being involved in all aspects of policy development and implementation, particularly in regards to violence against them—*Nothing about us, without us!*

Ms Karni Liddell
NDIS Queensland Ambassador

12. Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2017). 13. *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of findings, 2015*. cat. no. 4430.0, Table 1.3. Available at: <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4430.0>.

13. Ibid.

All governments in Australia have endorsed the National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians (Elder Abuse) 2019–2023, released in March 2019, which sets out commitments of the Australian Government and state and territory governments to respond to the abuse of **older people**. In Queensland, the Government commissioned reviews of the prevalence and characteristics of elder abuse and Queensland Government datasets. The Queensland Elder Abuse Helpline and Elder Abuse Prevention Unit are providing free education, information and referrals to support services for older people and their family and friends as well as community workers.

The experiences and needs of women and children from **culturally and linguistically diverse** backgrounds have been another area of interest for the Council given that almost two in five Queenslanders were either born overseas or had at least one parent born overseas.¹⁴ Women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds often require intensive support to safely escape domestic and family violence because of complex legal and immigration issues, compounded by communication and social barriers, visa status and extended family structures.¹⁵

In 2017, the Queensland Government funded the establishment of two specialist domestic and family violence services to support women and children from a culturally and linguistically diverse background on the Gold Coast and in Logan. *The Queensland Multicultural Action Plan 2019–20 to 2021–22* is supporting and funding services, including specialist legal support, for culturally diverse women and children affected by domestic and family violence, including refugees and asylum seekers. Government agencies have also revised language services guidelines and enhanced interpreter support in domestic and family violence court proceedings.

The Council notes that the Third Action Plan identifies responses to address the impact of domestic and family violence for Queenslanders from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds as a signature action over the next two years. The Council is encouraged by this focus, and urges the Government to ensure that focused actions are developed, evaluated and publicly reported against to ensure they are responsive to the needs of these communities.

Personal reflections – Faiza El-Higzi



It has been a privilege to be part of the Council and to have the opportunity to be part of a dedicated team working to address domestic and family violence in Queensland. There has been real change over the past four years. I see a change in attitude of some of the new and

emerging communities towards domestic and family violence as an issue. Previously it was difficult to hold a discussion about domestic and family violence in a public forum among some culturally diverse communities. Women in these communities are leading the cultural change, supported in some cases by men who also want to see change. More activities to help communities understand domestic and family violence and how to respond are taking place in communities, on social media and across service provider networks. Many women are developing their own responses to support victims of violence in their own community.

Because most of this work is happening in Brisbane, I found the Council's regional trips very informative. Regional women who come from diverse backgrounds can suffer in silence because of social and economic isolation, and importantly because of fear of being deported. Most women in these situations are told by perpetrators and others that their visas will be revoked if they disclose their situations, which is not the case. Domestic and family violence in some culturally diverse communities can be perpetrated by other family members, such as in-laws, rather than partners. This complexity means some of our standard responses are not adequate.

While these issues are complex, it is important that we have started this process of change, and that the communities are keen to devise solutions that enable them to provide adequate services to victims while rehabilitating perpetrators. The journey is long, but I believe we are on the right path to deal with this insidious social problem. The coming years are even more important now that we have a deeper understanding of the complexity of the problem and potential ways forward.

Ms Faiza El-Higzi

The Queensland AIDS Council has developed and delivered the 'Queer Without Fear—Domestic and Family Violence in the LGBTIQ+ Community' training package to build the capacity of domestic and family violence services to better support LGBTIQ+ communities. The Queensland LGBTI Roundtable, established in 2018, meets three times each year to enable the Government to consult, engage and share information and ensure that government policies and services are inclusive of, and responsive to, the needs of LGBTIQ+ communities. In December 2018, a 12-month campaign to raise awareness of the incidence of, and support mechanisms available for, people suffering domestic and family violence within the LGBTIQ+ communities was launched. In 2016, the Queensland Police Service established an LGBTIQ+ Support Network to promote the Queensland Police Service as a workplace that embraces, encourages and supports the diversity of its officers. The Queensland Police Service's long-established network of more than 130 LGBTIQ+ liaison officers has also led the way in working with LGBTIQ+ communities to improve safety and police responses to members of the communities across Queensland.

Other supporting strategies

The Council also recognises the ongoing work across the Government under a range of frameworks that promote inclusiveness, opportunity, and access for all Queenslanders regardless of who they are, where they live, where they were born, and what skills and abilities they do or do not have. These include Queensland's disability plan, multicultural policy, youth strategy, women's strategy, age-friendly community action plan and the Local Thriving Communities reform program. This work, too, is critical to change community attitudes to diversity and violence, to build respectful and healthy relationships and support networks, and provide the economic and social opportunities that are so important to empowering people in abusive relationships.

In last year's report, the Council stressed the importance of accounting for diversity in evaluations of key elements of the reform program, and in broader data collection about domestic and family violence. The Council supports the ongoing work under the Evaluation Framework for the *Domestic and Family Violence Strategy 2016–2026* to ensure robust monitoring of progress and evaluation of reform outcomes, again emphasising the need to account for diversity in these systems.



14. Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs (2018) Diversity figures: June 2018, Queensland Government. Available at: <https://www.dlgrma.qld.gov.au/resources/multicultural/communities/diversity-figures-report.pdf>

15. Vaughan, C et al. (2016). *Promoting community-led responses to violence against immigrant and refugee women in metropolitan and regional Australia: The ASPIRE Project: Key findings and future directions*. Sydney: ANROWS.

Personal reflections – Dr Wendell Rosevear



Through the work of the Council I have observed a passionate, collective desire to make our society safer across the spectrum of agencies, community groups and individuals. People want change.

We need to nurture Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to own their response to domestic and family violence, and

respect them to achieve the healing that they talk about. This Healing Spirit is more than the limitations of thinking that the fear of punishment could motivate behaviour change. It doesn't and it can't.

It is vital that our response doesn't have a ripple effect and harm others. In North Queensland, we heard about the removal of a father, the blaming of a mother for 'not protecting the children' and the removal of the children, the children not going to school, and the cycle repeating itself. We have to stop doing what isn't working.

I admire the work of Kalwun Development Corporation, which is owning the response by delivering gold standard health and community services on the Gold Coast. They have achieved about 70–80 per cent engagement with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, offering nine contact points including health, early childhood support, family wellbeing and housing services. Kalwun is responding to need, not just depending on allocated funding with services siloed from each other. Of their own initiative, they have employed a domestic violence worker who sees female and male victims. Kalwun's programs are focused on safe access to services for clients and a collective community response that values all workers. This internal culture translates to welcoming health responses for community members in need.

During our visit to the Gold Coast, I was privileged to meet with staff from the Gold Coast University Hospital. This hospital's response to domestic and family violence is the best health response I have seen. The hospital prioritises victim safety from the minute the patient arrives, and proactively empowers patients to disclose. The hospital employed a forensic doctor resulting in a 50 per cent increase in evidence collection, which is vital for an adequate legal response if indicated. It also has a unique Mum and Bubs unit.

In my four years as a member of the Council, I have observed greater recognition of the reality of alcohol and drugs being a risk factor in domestic and family violence,

including through the work of the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board. Previously this reality was met with frank denial in some quarters. We can't afford that denial if we want a safe society. I would like to see every presentation of domestic and family violence as an opportunity for affected individuals to be offered support, if alcohol and drugs are a contributing factor.

In same sex relationships we know the prevalence of domestic and family violence is high—41 per cent of men and 22 per cent of women reported experiencing physical violence in a same sex relationship.¹⁶ These higher figures reflect past marginalisation and discrimination stemming from widespread devaluing of same-sex relationships, and increased relief seeking in alcohol and drugs. Initiatives to increase awareness of domestic and family violence and available support within LGBTIQ+ communities are welcome, especially the opening of discussion about what makes a relationship healthy or unhealthy.

I have seen a needed shift to acknowledge both male and female victims, but we need to be more respectful and inclusive in our language. The name of the 2018 Council of Australian Governments (COAG) National Summit on Reducing Violence against Women and their Children was exclusive of men, and inflammatory in suggesting women owned the children.

We know that currently one in six women and one in 16 men identify as victims of domestic and family violence. Queensland Police Service data show that in 2016–2017, three in four respondents were male, and one in four aggrieved were male.¹⁷

We have campaigns challenging us all not to be silent as bystanders. It is time that we collectively say we can't afford to ignore one victim if we are going to have a safe community. No one should be invisible.

Abuse is caused by power and denial, and we can't fix it by using power and denial. I want a society where we foster acceptance and respect for honesty and choice. We are still challenged by how to help partners achieve safety if they choose not to leave an abusive relationship. It is important to value them by respecting their choice. Otherwise they won't disclose or ask for help, which is the best chance we have to help them engage with services to achieve change and safety.

It is time we value all people as equal if we want to prevent domestic and family violence—valuable people, value people. It is in everyone's interests that men and women resolve abuse and be safe. We need what I call a resolution culture, guided by the golden rule of treating people how you would like to be treated. I am passionate to be part of building a safer society.

Dr Wendell J. Rosevear OAM
Director, Stonewall Medical Centre

Personal reflections – Darren Lockyer



The work of the Council and the Beyond the Broncos program continues to reinforce for me the importance of teaching our children and young people about the importance of respect. Respect for ourselves, our friends, colleagues and partners, and the people we come across as we go about our daily activities.

We all have our struggles. Sometimes it's obvious to see someone's struggles, and it is encouraging to see so many sporting professionals putting their hands up to ask for help. But a lot of the time it's not so easy to see someone else's struggles.

That is why it is so important to treat everyone with respect. How you treat a person can have a massive impact and make a positive difference on not only their day, but their lives. Not all disrespectful behaviour results in violence. But all violence starts with disrespectful behaviour.

As a parent, I am pleased to see that Respectful Relationships programs are now mainstream in schools. These programs aim to tackle abusive behaviour by challenging assumptions about gender, power and equality. They help our children and young people to appreciate diversity, manage and express their emotions appropriately, negotiate and resolve conflict, and become more confident, resilient and adaptable. They teach the differences between abusive and non-abusive relationships, and safe and unsafe situations, as well as ensuring that students know how and where to seek help if they feel unsafe. In an increasingly complex and changing world these are such important life skills for our children and young people to develop.

Over the course of their schooling, our children learn how to interact and work with each other. Formal programs like these are therefore important. But as parents, family members and a broader community, we all have a responsibility to stand up against disrespect and abuse. We need to lead by example. We need to talk to our children, and help them understand what's okay and what's not okay. As a parent, I want my children to have every opportunity to achieve their dreams, personally and professionally. I want them to be valued for who they are as a person and what they can do. That all starts with respect for themselves and for others.

Mr Darren Lockyer

16. Pitts, M., Smith, A., Mitchell, A., & Patel, S. (2006). *Private lives: A report on the health and wellbeing of LGBTI Australians*. Melbourne: Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society.

17. Queensland Police Service. (2017). *Annual Statistical Review, 2016–17*. Brisbane: QPS, p. 30. Available at: https://www.police.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-01/AnnualStatisticalReview_2016-17.pdf.

Continuing the reform journey: Not Now, Not Ever. *Together*

On 24 October 2019, the Queensland Government announced that all 140 recommendations of the *Not Now, Not Ever* report have been implemented—121 recommendations for government and another 19 for non-government organisations. This is an important milestone and a significant achievement for all those who have worked so hard to make it happen.

We must also remember that we are only four years into a 10-year reform program. Much remains to be done. In the 2018–19 financial year, 19 women, men and children were killed by a family member or by someone they were, or had been, in an intimate partner relationship with.¹⁸ This is almost half of Queensland’s homicide victims during the period.¹⁹ Many more Queenslanders were physically injured as a result of domestic and family violence, while yet more have endured a range of other traumas, including isolation, financial hardship and homelessness. Responding to incidents of domestic and family violence remains the single most common operational activity for police officers across Queensland.

The Council is encouraged by the Queensland Government’s continuing commitment to the reform program. The Third Action Plan under the 10-year Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy, released in September 2019, outlines further actions needed to continue embedding cultural change and system reform while encouraging and helping build further community ownership of this issue.

Signature actions in the Third Action Plan include:

- partnering with business and community to strengthen the response to and prevention of domestic and family violence
- improving equitable access to services for Queenslanders most vulnerable to and impacted by domestic and family violence
- continuing to develop integrated service responses and service sector capacity to respond effectively to those who experience domestic and family violence
- increasing economic participation of, and access to, safe secure housing for women affected by domestic and family violence and their children
- evolving the Specialist Domestic and Family Violence Court model
- embedding Respectful Relationships education in Queensland schools.

In last year’s report, the Council highlighted the need to maintain the momentum for reform as recommendations are completed and new issues compete for priority. It is worth reinforcing that message following the formal delivery of the *Not Now, Not Ever* report recommendations this year. We all have a responsibility to continue working towards the vision of a Queensland free from domestic and family violence. It is only together that we can end the violence so that all Queenslanders can feel safe in their own homes, and children can develop in safe and secure environments.



The Honourable Di Farmer MP, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Ms Kay McGrath OAM, Chair of the Council, the Honourable Quentin Bryce AD CVO, former Council Chair, and the Honourable Anastacia Palaszczuk MP, Premier of Queensland

18. Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board. (2019). *2018–19 Annual report*. Brisbane: Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board, p. 26. Available at: <https://www.courts.qld.gov.au/courts/coroners-court/review-of-deaths-from-domestic-and-family-violence>.

19. In 2018–19 there were 43 reported victims of homicide in Queensland. Queensland Police Service. (2019). Reported victims number – Qld. Excel spreadsheet published monthly by the QPS. Accessed on 5 November 2019: <https://www.police.qld.gov.au/maps-and-statistics>

Highlights

Members have had different journeys with the Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council. Some were involved early in the reform process through their engagement in the different capacities with the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence (the Taskforce). Kathryn McMillan QC was engaged to advise on options for addressing the complexity and tensions between federal family law issues and legal responses to domestic and family violence. Faiza El-Higzi and Dr Wendell Rosevear were involved in consultations by the Taskforce as advocates and community leaders. Kay McGrath facilitated some of the Taskforce's consultation and engagement events.

Nineteen community members have served on the Council since it was established in 2015. On the other hand, by virtue of their professional journeys, none of the original ex-officio members remained on the Council at the end of its term. In March 2017, Kay McGrath replaced the Honourable Quentin Bryce as Chair of the Council.

In reflecting on their role on the Council, current and previous members have consistently observed their privileged position in witnessing the unprecedented commitment to action across government, the service and business sectors, and the community to work towards a Queensland free of domestic and family violence. In their visits to communities across Queensland, the Council has observed services and systems at different stages of maturity. The most recent visit to the Gold Coast revealed a strongly connected and coordinated service system characterised by an advanced state of practice and innovation. This wasn't so in other parts of the state. What is common across the state, however, is the commitment, dedication, innovation and passion of individuals working with victims, survivors and perpetrators of domestic and family violence and their children, as well as those working to support the service providers. The Council continues to be inspired by and forever grateful for their hard work and resilience.



The final Council meeting on 13 November 2019—members of the Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group with the Honourable Di Farmer MP, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence

There have been many highlights in conversation, reflections and lessons from people I engaged with in my role with the Council. These insights are different because of the role of the Council. It was a privilege to have the opportunity to have these conversations one-to-one or in groups with respect for difference, diversity and approach, as was sharing the insights, reflections, expertise of other Council members. I really appreciated the support we received and the generosity of people in sharing their reflections. The common thread for me in these conversations is the commitment of everyone with the diversity of views to find a place where there can be threads of affirmation for local effort within a statewide and national context. The work is hard, and we all need to feel part of something bigger that sustains the effort, solves the challenges and takes up opportunity.

Ms Karyn Walsh AM
CEO, Micah Projects

The most rewarding part of being a Council member is being able to make sure that people with disability who experience domestic and family violence are represented at every level and within every sector and service provider. All Council members have joined me in ensuring people with disability are included in all discussions. Minister Di Farmer has been instrumental in raising awareness and educating the community and the domestic and family violence sector about the increased rate of domestic and family violence experienced by people with disability, and the particular vulnerabilities associated their experiences. Being able to educate service providers within my Council role was truly rewarding and I have witnessed many service providers change their policies and procedures to better support people with disability moving forward, including with respect to the recording of data.

I found it especially rewarding being able to influence all Respectful Relationships programs delivered within educational settings to ensure all their workshops are delivered to students with a disability in a tailored way.

Ms Karni Liddell
NDIS Queensland Ambassador

The highlight of my time on the Council has been the opportunity to meet such a diverse range of people with a true passion for helping those impacted by domestic and family violence. From the members on the Council and the many dedicated workers we have met on community visits—from Mount Isa, Mackay, Toowoomba and the Gold Coast—all the individual actions accumulate to massive impact.

Mrs Denise Kostowski
Principal of Forest Lake State High School

Having the opportunity to see the tremendous innovation, collaboration and information sharing taking place on the ground to tackle what is a complex issue has truly been inspiring. There is no one solution to addressing domestic and family violence. It requires ongoing commitment and effort within our respective organisations and across government and the community. It has been personally and professionally rewarding to be a member of a Council that has maintained its energy and commitment to overseeing and monitoring initiatives aimed at enhancing victim safety and holding perpetrators to account. We have progressed a long way towards creating a Queensland where people can feel safe in their own homes, with children growing up in safe and nurturing environments free of domestic and family violence. The Council has played an important role in driving difficult change. I have huge respect for my fellow Council members. It has been a privilege to work with them to shape the future of domestic and family violence prevention in Queensland.

Deputy Commissioner Steve Gollschewski APM
Queensland Police Service

Although there are so many highlights of my time on the Council, for me it is an overwhelming level of appreciation of the dedication, passion and hard work of so many organisations and people making a difference.

Mr Lance Hockridge
Deputy Chair, Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council

The opportunity to be on the Council has been an honour and privilege. Having exposure to such a variety of people all working towards a single focus on ending family and domestic violence across the state has definitely been a growth opportunity. It has presented many opportunities for learning, and I perhaps would even say it has gone a long way towards my own healing as a male, husband, father, uncle and son. I have definitely been challenged, but I have also been inspired and have more hope for the future in terms of how we address domestic and family violence in our communities.

Mr Edward Mosby
Founder and Principal Psychologist,
Wakai Waian Healing
Chair, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Advisory Group

Early on I realised we didn't just have a role to oversee reform through the implementation of the *Not Now, Not Ever* report recommendations. We had a role to support the hard work of people at the front line—police, educators, judicial officers and others in the legal system, domestic and family violence workers, health practitioners, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. To listen to victims, and hear what helped and what didn't.

Dr Wendell Rosevear OAM
Director of Stonewall Medical Centre

It is always a highlight for Council when we can help achieve something really concrete for the communities we visit. For example, during the Council's visit to Mackay in 2018, it was identified that there was a lack of crisis accommodation and counselling services for children and young people affected by domestic and family violence. Following the visit, various Council members worked to help connect local and influential business representatives who had indicated that they would be willing to do more to support the community to address domestic and family violence. This aligned with the approach of the Mayor's Domestic Violence Taskforce, which has built momentum for cultural change across the Mackay community. I was pleased to hear that the 2019 Mayor's Charity Ball attracted record corporate sponsorship and attendance helping to raise \$121,000 for the Domestic Violence Resource Service to provide extra counselling services for children caught up in domestic and family violence and sexual abuse who would otherwise miss out on help. In recognising the significant community response to assist vulnerable young people, Mayor Greg Williamson noted that, "... there is no doubt, the visit by the Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council, assisted the community awareness to the point that the Mayor's Charity Ball benefited from the greatest ever donations". These efforts demonstrate how the Council can influence change; the importance of strong local leadership; and the positive and tangible impact the business, corporate and community sectors can make on the lives of local people when they work together.

Ms Kay McGrath OAM
Chair, Domestic and Family Violence
Implementation Council

The most rewarding experience on the Council, for me, was the trip to Mount Isa. The scale and intensity of violence, complicated by homelessness and overcrowding, was confronting. Police, together with other agencies, were commencing a triage system on a smaller scale than that of the Gold Coast. We met a remarkable individual, Father Mick Lowcock, who is trusted by both the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and police. Among many other things, Father Mick operates diversionary programs for male perpetrators; locates, transports and supports people required to attend court—it is not easy to locate people who don't carry mobile phones—and collects children from the most disadvantaged areas to attend the PCYC for sport. I have remained in touch with Father Mick who uses any small grant he can scrape together to invest in programs for his community. His most recent venture was establishing a kitchen where he teaches young people to shop for food and cook after school and in the evenings. This not only feeds these young people, it keeps them off the streets and out of trouble.

Ms Kathryn McMillan QC

Appendix 1 – Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council members



Ms Kay McGrath OAM (Chair)

Ms McGrath is an award-winning journalist and presenter with 44 years' experience in the media. She has presented prime time news bulletins in Queensland for 40 years. In addition to her journalism, Ms McGrath has worked as a facilitator, speaker and Master of Ceremonies and supports a variety of community causes. She is patron of the Daniel Morcombe Foundation, patron and co-founder of Protect All Children Today, Lifetime Ambassador for Act for Kids and Vice Patron of the Queensland Breast and Prostate Cancer Association. She is also the face of Women in Media Queensland. In 2019, Ms McGrath was honoured as a Queensland Great in recognition of her tireless work in the community.



Mr Lance Hockridge (Deputy Chair)

Mr Hockridge is the former Chief Executive Officer of Aurizon Holdings. He is the founding member of Queensland's 'Male Champions of Change' group that is leading diversity initiatives in the workplace in Queensland. Mr Hockridge won the Australian Human Resources Institute Diversity Chief Executive Officer Champion of 2014, and the United Nations' CEO Leadership Award in 2016. He has enabled a partnership with the Australian National Committee of United Nations (UN) Women and has spoken at UN Women business events across Australia. Mr Hockridge is the Chairman of the Salvation Army's Queensland Advisory Board, and a former private sector member of the Australian Government's Department of Defence Force Gender Equality Advisory Board.



Associate Professor Kathleen Baird

Dr Baird holds a joint appointment as Associate Professor in Midwifery, School of Nursing and Midwifery at Griffith University and Director of Midwifery and Nursing Education, Women's and Newborn Services at Gold Coast University Hospital. Dr Baird has been a midwife since 1996 and has clinical experience in a variety of positions. In her academic career, which stretches over a decade and two continents, Dr Baird's work has a strong focus on the health response to domestic violence and women's experiences of domestic violence during pregnancy. Her current appointments include Deputy Chair of the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board, Senior Research Fellow with the University of the West of England, Bristol and Visiting Scholar for Metro South and Bayside Hospitals.



Ms Faiza El-Higzi

Ms El-Higzi is a Board Director with the Queensland Council of Social Service and has extensive experience in multicultural affairs, including working with refugees and asylum seekers. Ms El-Higzi holds many advisory positions in community organisations and peak bodies such as the Queensland African Communities Council, and is a respected Muslim community leader. Ms El-Higzi has experience in strategic policy at both state and federal levels and holds a number of post-graduate qualifications. She is currently undertaking PhD research on gender studies at the University of Queensland.



Mrs Denise Kostowski

Mrs Kostowski is the Principal of Forest Lake State High School. Prior to this, she was the Principal of Spinifex State College in Mount Isa. She has been actively involved and committed to the delivery of quality education programs to students in rural and remote Queensland schools for more than 25 years. After being an active member of the Mount Isa community for many years, Mrs Kostowski now works in western Brisbane. She has been recognised for her outstanding leadership by the Principals Australia Institute and awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Queensland Secondary Principals' Association.



Mr Ian Leavers

Mr Leavers is the General President and Chief Executive Officer of the Queensland Police Union of Employees, a role he has held since 2009, and is a currently serving police officer. Mr Leavers began his police career in 1989 and has worked in General Duties, the Traffic Branch, the Accident Investigation Squad, the Criminal Investigation Branch and the Child Protection Investigation Unit. Mr Leavers serves on several boards, including as a director of QBANK, WorkCover Queensland, Vice-President of the Police Federation of Australia, and is a previous member of the Queensland Government's Work Health and Safety Board. Together with his extensive policing qualifications, he is also a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Ms Karni Liddell

Ms Liddell is a disability specialist and a National Disability Insurance Scheme Ambassador and Advisor for the State of Queensland. Ms Liddell is one of Australia's most successful and well-respected Paralympic swimmers and has worked as a social worker, trainer and assessor, radio presenter/journalist and public speaker.



Mr Darren Lockyer

Mr Lockyer is a former professional rugby league footballer, captaining the Brisbane Broncos, and Queensland and Australian teams. He has been highly sought as an ambassador and motivational speaker for various brands and the media. He is currently a Channel Nine commentator, a contributor for *The Courier-Mail* and an ambassador for Origin Energy, One Key Resources, NRL and the Brisbane Broncos. Mr Lockyer has been involved in a number of charity endeavours including the Life Education Awards and visits to Brisbane's Children's Hospital.



Ms Kathryn McMillan QC

Ms McMillan is a barrister and mediator practising primarily in all aspects of Administrative Law, Family Law, Civil/Human Rights and Discrimination and Child Protection Law. She has a long-term interest in the legal issues around bioethics as well as domestic and family violence. Ms McMillan is also an Adjunct Professor at the TC Beirne School of Law, University of Queensland.



Mr Edward Mosby

Mr Mosby is the founder and Principal Psychologist of Wakai Waian Healing, which directly provides psychology and counselling services and works with organisations and professionals to build their capability and capacity to deliver mental health, and social and emotional wellbeing services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. He previously worked at the Helem Yumba Central Queensland Healing Centre with perpetrators of domestic and family violence. Mr Mosby is an independent director of ANROWS, and was a member of the COAG Advisory Panel on Reducing Violence against Women and their Children.



Dr Wendell Rosevear OAM

Dr Rosevear is a General Practitioner and Director of Stonewall Medical Centre and has worked in the areas of drug and alcohol rehabilitation, suicide prevention, rape and sexual abuse, gay, lesbian, intersex and transgender health, HIV/AIDS, counselling, and prisoner health. Dr Rosevear is the founder of the Gay and Lesbian Alcohol and Drug support group (GLADS), the Men Affected by Rape and Sexual Abuse support group (MARS), and co-founder of the Gay and Lesbian Health Service.



Ms Karyn Walsh AM

Ms Walsh is the Chief Executive Officer of Micah Projects which provides a range of support and advocacy services to individuals and families. Ms Walsh has 38 years' experience in the community sector developing organisations and implementing programs to create opportunities for personal and social change. She has been involved in a range of projects including homelessness partnerships, inclusive health partnerships, the work of Lotus Place, mental health and disability services and domestic and family violence response services.



Ms Samantha Wild

Ms Wild is a proud Wakka Wakka and South Sea Islander woman and is Director for Awakening Cultural Ways which provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research and advice on health and human services. Ms Wild facilitates workshops and research in cultural competency, social and emotional wellbeing, mental health, trauma and healing.

Ms Wild began her career 15 years ago as a youth counsellor and advanced to state and national management roles in youth mental health, social and emotional wellbeing (SEWB) and healing. Ms Wild's passion is using her knowledge and workshops to inspire healing and improve the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



In the past 12 months, the following people also served as members of the Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council:



Ms Janette Phelan

Council member until 20 February 2019

Ms Phelan is a Psychologist who has worked in private practice, education, guiding and church organisations. Over the last nine years Ms Phelan has worked in Queensland, establishing a private psychology practice for Churches of Christ in Queensland and working as Mission Action Partner (an endorsed minister working with local churches and welfare groups). This work has involved supporting traumatised victims of the 2011 Brisbane floods and Cyclone Yasi and dealing with the psychological needs of people with disabilities and psychological conditions. She was appointed Chair of the Joint Churches Domestic Violence Prevention project for two years from 2017-2018. In 2019, Janette relocated back to Melbourne and is continuing her work in domestic and family violence prevention and establishing a local psychology practice.



Professor Annabel Taylor

Council member until 30 August 2019

Professor Taylor is Research Professor in Gendered Violence at Central Queensland University's Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research, having served as the Centre's Director from 2014–2018. Before that Professor Taylor was Director of the Te Awatea Violence Research Centre at New Zealand's University of Canterbury from 2009 to 2014. Her research and publications have encompassed criminal justice, social work, and gendered-based violence. She has completed national Australian and New Zealand projects investigating domestic and family violence, and child abuse. Professor Taylor has been a pioneer in introducing extensive domestic and family violence education and training options at both higher education and vocational levels in partnership with Central Queensland University.



Judge Ray Rinaudo AM

Council member until 8 July 2019

Judge Rinaudo is a Judge of the District Court, and was Chief Magistrate of Queensland from 2014 to 2019. His Honour was appointed as a Queensland Magistrate in 2005, and served throughout South East Queensland and regional Queensland. Judge Rinaudo has also held the positions of President of the Queensland Law Society, Crime and Misconduct Commissioner and Legal Aid Commissioner. His Honour has extensive experience in alternative dispute resolution and international experience in teaching mediation both in Hong Kong and Malaysia as well as locally, having taught in Arbitration and Mediation at the University of Queensland. Judge Rinaudo is Adjunct Professor in the School of Social Science, University of Queensland.

Ex-officio members

The Council also includes ex-officio members representing Queensland Government agencies with domestic and family violence reform responsibilities. These agencies and current ex-officio representatives are:

Department of the Premier and Cabinet — Ms Rebecca McGarrity, Executive Director, Social Policy

Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women — Ms Leigh Roach, Deputy Director-General, Strategy

Department of Justice and Attorney-General — Ms Jenny Lang, Deputy Director-General, Justice Services

Queensland Police Service — Deputy Commissioner Steve Gollschewski APM, Strategy, Policy and Performance



